

Hafa Adai!

Susupe to pilot community garden project in the CNMI. **PAGE 8**
OAG warns retailers: Price gouging is illegal. **PAGE 9**

75¢

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COE to pursue injunction

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada has changed his mind and has decided to pursue the filing of an injunction that would guarantee the Public School System an annual budget of not less than 25% of the Commonwealth's general revenue.

In a letter to Board of Education chair Janice Tenorio, Ada said he decided to support the filing of an injunction against the CNMI government

because he wants to support PSS' learning needs.

"I want to move forward with the daily operation and

See COE on Page 4

ON EVE OF ROTA MAYOR EFRAIM M. ATALIG'S JURY TRIAL IN FEDERAL COURT

Banes arrested for alleged hit-and-run, DUI

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

David G. Banes, who is Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig's lawyer in a corruption case in federal court, was arrested yesterday afternoon for allegedly fleeing the scene after hitting another car with his vehicle in Susupe.



Banes

The jury trial of Atalig and his girlfriend, Evelyn Atalig, is currently set to start today, Tuesday, in the U.S. District Court

See BANES on Page 4



SSHS sweeps drill competition

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A team from Saipan Southern High School's Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps

swept the armed and the unarmed division of the annual CNMI Drill Competition last Saturday at the Koblerville Gymnasium.

SSHS' unarmed team came

The Saipan Southern High School armed and unarmed squad pose for a photo following the annual CNMI Drill competition last weekend.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

out on top with an overall score of 3,521 and their unarmed team won with an overall score of 3,288.

In the unarmed category, SSHS got 744 points for unarmed inspection, 791 points

See SSHS on Page 4

'Federally funded employees to be exempt from austerity'

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Pending a final decision

from the Torres administration within the week, federally funded employees would be exempted from austerity

cuts that is bound to begin on March 15, made necessary by the drastic downturn in the CNMI economy.

In an early morning interview at KKMP radio yesterday, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres

See AUSTERITY on Page 4

INSIDE



BUSINESS

United Airlines is adjusting its Guam flight schedules due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

PAGE 13



WORLD

Women filled the streets of the world's largest cities on International Women's Day.

PAGE 16



LIFE & STYLE

Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, will fulfill their final royal commitment.

PAGE 19



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Local



Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, third from the right, front row, joins members of the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter and other partners after signing the proclamation for American Red Cross Month. KRIZEL TUAZON

March is American Red Cross Month



PRESIDENTIAL CAUCUS 2020 03.14.20

Youngest Members of the Democratic Family

Democrats in the Northern Marianas will caucus on March 14, 2020 to select delegates to the 2020 Democratic National Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, July 13-16, 2020, which will nominate the Democratic Party candidates for President and Vice President of the United States of America

NMI registered voters who would like to participate and register as members of the party are welcome and encouraged to attend

Registered voters and persons who will be eligible to vote on or before Nov 3, 2020 on Saipan, Tinian, & Rota will be able to visit the designated caucus voting sites and cast votes for their Democratic Presidential Candidate of choice



JOE BIDEN



BERNIE SANDERS

The caucus will be held on Saipan at the World Resort's Royal Taga Ballroom, with simultaneous sub-caucuses at

Northern Marianas College
Rota Center Room B2
VTC Room

Northern Marianas College
Tinian Center Room C
VTC Room

Doors open at 5:00 PM with doors closing for the caucuses to begin promptly at 6:00 PM

visit www.nmidems.org for more info

Don't miss this opportunity to participate in democracy and have a voice in choosing the next President of the United States!

March was designated American Red Cross Month yesterday in a proclamation signing at the Office of the Governor's conference room on Capital Hill.

Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, who signed the proclamation, said the occasion honors the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter's staff, volunteers, and supporters for their dedication, hard work, and constant help to those in need during disasters and other hard times.

"Red Cross is the Red Cross because of the people in this community. And without every single person here in the CNMI, the Red Cross would not be able to do what it does best. And that's providing support to those that need it during times of disasters, but also to help prevent a lot of these disasters," said

Tayna Belyeu-Camacho.

ARC-NMI Chapter executive director John Hirsch thanked the board members of the local organization and the government, the Legislature, and federal partners such as Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Defense, Commonwealth Guidance Center, Commonwealth Cancer Coalition, Saipan Chamber of Commerce, the military family, and so many others who took time out to help ARC recognize this important day.

"We are very grateful for the overwhelming response that we receive day in and day out from our donors, our community members, and our government partners. *Un dongkulu na si yu'us ma'ase, ohuumway* for your support, thank you," Belyeu-Camacho added.

Walkathon postponed

Hirsch also announced yesterday that the annual ARC Walkathon will be postponed this year.

The event is usually held on the month of April but, due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the organization has decided to postpone it until further notice for the community's safety.

"So we are, in the abundance of caution, going to push back our walkathon because it involves 3,000 children in one place, one time, and we just felt that by the end of April is probably not a good idea. But stay tuned," said Hirsch.

Dedicating the month of March to the American Red Cross also fits with all the women that volunteer for the ARC because International Women's Day was also celebrated last March 8. (Krizel Tuazon)

OVR wants exemption from austerity

The State Rehabilitation Council wants to be exempted from the 16-hour cut that is part of the austerity measures the CNMI government will implement starting March 15.

At a general membership meeting last Thursday, the council questioned its inclusion in the austerity measure and the looming 16-hour cut, despite the agency being federally funded.

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation director Maryann Arriola said that OVR, which is under the council, needs to

comply with standards when it comes to meeting services and consumer services in a timely manner.

"[The work-hour cut] is going to hamper operations and consumer services, which is very disheartening and there is nothing we can do at this point," she said.

Right now, Arriola is working with the Office of the Governor to submit an extension letter to clarify the matter.

She also reported they completed Phase 2 of their grant submission and is now waiting

to be awarded.

OVR has about 200 cases they are serving, though they only have three rehabilitation counselors.

In addition, they have placed seven clients in jobs at Micronesian Brokers Inc, Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, Triple J Wholesale, Taro Sue, and OVR.

"I'm so grateful to some of the private business for hiring people with disabilities to be a part of the society and making them independent on their own," she added. (Chevy Alipio)

Free kids' e-book on keeping hands germ-free

As a public service to the CNMI and the worldwide communities, author and nurse Riza Ramos has authorized a free e-book download of her book, *GermStopper Boy: The Clean Hands Hero*, for families, educators and health care personnel to freely share.

"The best way to prevent

the spread of infection is hand washing," said Ramos, a former Commonwealth Health Center nurse. "This children's book was written during the time I was teaching my own son the importance of washing his hands correctly."

Germstopper Boy tells the story of Little Eman, who learned to understand why he

always has to wash his hands. The story is told in easy-to-understand rhyme (for ages 8-10; third grade level), and features bold, full-color illustrations by Rodante Guarda.

Download the free e-book at: <http://rizaramosbooks.com>, where you can also order the paperback or hardcover edition. (PR)

From Senate, hemp bill bounces back to House

A bill that would legalize the use of hemp in the CNMI for industrial purposes has passed the Senate with amendments, and is moving back to the House of Representatives to be acted on.

Authored by Rep. Marco T.

Peter (R-Saipan), the "CNMI Hemp Farming Industry Act of 2019" reflects the changes in the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018, or the 2018 Farm Bill, which removed hemp as a Schedule 1 con-

trolled substance.

Schedule 1 drugs are those with no currently accepted medical use, and with a high potential for abuse like heroin, cannabis, ecstasy, and LSD.

Rep. Vinnie F. Sablan (Ind-

Saipan), who chairs the Senate Committee on Cannabis and Gaming, said the bill removes hemp from the purview of the Commonwealth Cannabis Commission and moves it under the Division of Agriculture of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources.

The bill also aims to allow hemp producers to be eligible for federal funding by certain federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"We needed to remove it from the Cannabis Commis-

sion and place it into the agricultural arm of the government so that we can avail of possible funds that were passed during the U.S. Congress' 2018 Farm Bill that freed up some money for that industry," Sablan said.

With the legalization of cannabis at the state level, keeping hemp under the regulatory authority of the Cannabis Commission could pose some challenges for the CNMI, in terms of availing some funds.

"Cannabis is still a Schedule 1 controlled substance, so it's

still illegal federally," the legislator said. "Therefore, if we place hemp under Cannabis [Commission], we cannot funnel any grants or any moneys through the Cannabis Commission because the legalization was taken at a state level, at a local government level, not on a federal level."

Sablan further said that they wanted to be consistent and to ensure that the CNMI can avail of any possible funding that comes from the federal government, and any grants that could help the industry thrive in the CNMI.

"Hopefully, this could be something that could really stir the needed economic activity for the CNMI," Sablan added. *(Iva Maurin)*

CDA vows continued support for its clients and businesses

The Commonwealth Development Authority, with the support of the CDA board of directors, joins the CNMI community in doing its best to stay calm, focused, efficient, and effective, with an unwavering commitment to providing support and assistance for business retention and expansion of our current CDA clients and the entire CNMI business (private) sector, who are committed to surviving this economic downturn by continuing to operate and manage their businesses, while we all look for innovative and effective strategies in being even more resilient in a tough economic environment.

CDA offers ongoing support and assistance for their clients/business owners, on a case-to-case basis, by seeking ways to provide logical and long-term relief, given the anticipated length and severity of the current regional and global economic situation, most especially due to recent

and unfolding events. CDA welcomes and appreciates any other suggestions in providing support and relief. Here are some of the effective options borrowers have considered:

1) Loan revisions provides lowered monthly payments and with longer terms for relief and repayment.

2) New loan requests for existing business owners provides working capital to cover business needs and obligations, or to fund new business ideas and other business support.

3) Payment deferrals: Based on verification of income and resources, CDA may provide temporary relief from monthly loan payment. Depending on the amount of those requests, CDA may need to consider whether to restrict new loan applications, if necessary, to prevent further anticipated losses.

CDA is equally committed to supporting and assisting aspiring business entrepreneurs and existing businesses by con-

tinuing with their existing loan programs for business loans up to \$150,000, by not imposing a restriction on new loans, to help provide financing for start-up costs and working capital for those who are also interested in realizing their dreams of providing a service or a product, which helps to create and retain jobs that also facilitates growth to provide a stable tax base that supports public services.

The CDA Loan department team is readily available and happy to assist. Contact:

■ Fred C. Cruz (670) 234-6245 Ext. 305 or email: f.cruz@developcnmi.com;

■ Abby C. Atalig (670) 234-6245 Ext. 309 or email: a.atalig@developcnmi.com

■ Marie Coleman (670) 234-6245 Ext. 307 or email: m.coleman@developcnmi.com

■ Or visit CDA at the ground floor of the CDA Building, Beach Road, San Jose, Saipan (across Oleai Beach Bar & Grill). *(PR)*

Rudnytsky returns; Fishman-Tudor leaving

Members and friends of Friends of the Arts are invited to a members' meeting this Friday, March 13, starting at 6:30pm, at the Tom Yum Restaurant, a Friends of the Arts sponsor. There will be musical entertainment by visiting classical pianist Roman Rudnytsky, the Marianas High School Glee Club, and other entertainment.

Rudnytsky is returning to Saipan to introduce the beauty of music to the students and to perform two concerts on March 14 and 20 at the Hyatt Regency Saipan ballroom at 7pm each evening.

Susan Fishman-Tudor, who has been president of the Friends of the Arts for 15

years, will be relocating to California after 25 years on Saipan.

Meet the new FOA board and your fellow members. The dinner cost is \$16 for adults and \$8 for children 6 to 10 years in age (no charge for 5 and younger). The Tom Yum Restaurant is located on Chalan Pale Arnold (Middle) Road in the Paradise Hotel, right across the Commonwealth Health Center. There is plenty of parking space in the hotel/restaurant parking lot behind the hotel with a back door direct into the restaurant.

Make your reservations by email to Frank Gibson at flgibson@yahoo.com or by text to 287-7476. *(PR)*

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Hotel under construction on Tinian

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A hotel that is currently being built on Tinian is being looked at as a means to somehow address the lack of rooms on the island, with two construction projects set to start next month as part of the divert airfield lease.

The divert airfield refers to the U.S. Department of Defense's plan to build an alternative landing airfield on Tinian in case the U.S. Anderson Airbase in Guam is unavailable due to wars or calamities.

Commonwealth Ports Authority board chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds said in a recent interview that her

understanding is that the construction of the 125-room hotel is well underway on Tinian.

"We're kind of hoping that it will address some of that issue," said King-Hinds, referring to lack of hotel rooms on the island.

She said she does not know the official name of the hotel but that it's located between Kammer Beach and Taga Beach in San Jose, Tinian.

"I walked there recently. ... They're in full construction mode," she said, adding that modular units are being constructed, so it's faster to put it together. "You would

basically use cement and cinder blocks," she said.

Last August, it was reported that the Tinian Hairui Real Estate Co. LLC is proposing to build and operate the \$3-million three-story, 138-room Kingsha Hotel along 8th Avenue and Kammer Beach.

Tinian Mayor Edwin Aldan has emphasized the need to have more hotel rooms on the island; right now, Tinian only has 52 rooms for tourists.

CPA expects to start the Marpo Heights 2 road pavement and the Tinian seaport top side improve-



King-Hinds

KES returns to full-day session

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Koblerville Elementary School will be returning to full-day sessions next week after over a year of half-day sessions.

According to a source from the Public School System, KES will return to regular session on March 16.

KES was one of the schools that bore the brunt of Super Typhoon Yutu over a year ago but classrooms have been repaired, instructional material have arrived, and they are ready to start regular sessions, the source said.

KES is the third school to return to full-day sessions, following Kagman Elementary School and Dandan Elementary School.

KES classes will begin promptly at 7:30am and end at 2:40pm.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, KagES reverted to full-day sessions and returned to their home campus last Monday.

The KagES campus, which served as a shelter during Super Typhoon Yutu, experienced electrical issues after a power pole that burned out near the school prevented power from running through the facility.

Dandan Middle School, one of

the schools that also sustained major damage and had to go into half-day session, returned to full session schedule in the first week of December, according to a source. They were the first school to return to full-day sessions.

Oleai Elementray School, San Vicente Elementary School, Francisco M. Sablan Elementary School, William S. Reyes Elementary School, and Kagman High School remain on half-day sessions.

In a previous interview with Education Commissioner Alfred Ada, the other schools that still remain on half-day and double sessions will return to full-day sessions this month.

good day for SSHS as it was their first time to sweep the competition.

"We won both armed and unarmed for the first time, we got both overall trophies, so it was a great day for the Manta Rays," he said, referring to the school's mascot, the Manta Ray.

Basa credits the hard work and dedication of his students for their outstanding performance.

"Its dedication. The other thing that I experienced with them is the countless hours of drill practice since we started back in the beginning of September. We have really strong drill commanders and they made this happen," he said.

As for the plan for the SSHS teams to represent the CNMI at the national

drill competition, "that's the plan but we are not sure yet, we haven't gotten word yet. As of right now, I have to wait on that information. With the situation, [the coronavirus] might be a factor in terms of the decision-making of the commissioner, principal, and Board of Education," Basa said.

Following SSHS in the unarmed category was Tinian High School, with an overall score of 3,432, Kagman High School with 3,410, Rota High School with 3,327, and Marianas High School with 3,294.

In the armed category, RHS came a close second with an overall score of 3,249, followed by MHS with 3,095, and finishing in fourth place was THS with a score of 2,996.

SSHS

From Page 1

for color, 1,003 points for regulation, and 983 for exhibition.

In the armed category, SSHS received 706 points for inspection, 700 points for color, 963 for regulation, 919 for exhibition.

Both SSHS' armed and unarmed teams plan to make the journey to California this year to compete at the National Drill competition, but those plans are still tentative at this point due to the novel coronavirus outbreak.

According to SSHS Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Basa, it was a very

COE

From Page 1

educational programs that are in place," said Ada in his letter. "Aside from working at the pleasure of the board, the PSS key management and I never lose sight of reaching out to the schools to support their learning needs."

Ada added that he supports the board's decision to file the injunction against the central government.

"The majority of the board voted to file the injunction. I support the majority decision because that is how democracy works. For example, in the classroom, students vote for their class officers and whoever has the majority vote wins. We teach the students that, as a citizen, we must ac-

cept the outcome and work with the decision. We are obligated to practice the democratic process in real life as well," he said.

Ada initially opposed the filing of the injunction. He now explained it in his letter to Ada that his initial stance was because he was thinking of the domino effect of the injunction on families and other government agencies.

"I thought of the position I hold as the commissioner of Education and my role is to protect the interest of the students' educational welfare. I am saddened about the economic crisis that we are encountering at the moment but my passion for CNMI education stands strong, to protect the education of our students," Ada said.

Ada said he wants to assure PSS personnel that he stands with them as

they all share the same duties to mold student minds.

"I want to assure the school system that we will stand together to fulfill our duties as educators to mold the great minds of our future generation by providing optimum education for all. Yes, all means all," he said.

In his initial opposition to the injunction, Ada characterized it as being forced to authorize an injunction he does not support.

Three of the five members of BOE voted to file the injunction against the government to enforce the Supreme Court's recent opinion in favor of PSS.

Tenorio and BOE vice chair Herman Atalig voted no, while Marylou Ada, Andrew Orsini, and Phillip Mendiola-Long voted yes to the filing of the injunction.

ments this April.

The two projects are part of the divert airfield negotiations and were among the outside-the-fence projects that the CPA board of directors had negotiated with the U.S. Department of Defense.

The 40-year divert airfield lease

agreement worth \$21.9 million for certain airport and seaport properties on Tinian is expected to spur economic activities on the island as it will directly benefit the people through infrastructure improvement of the Tinian International Airport, public roads, and community facilities.

BANES

From Page 1

for the NMI. It is not clear if Banes' arrest will affect the scheduled trial.

Sources at the Department of Public Safety disclosed that Banes was also allegedly under the influence of alcohol.

Sources said Banes' vehicle hit a car on Beach Road in Susupe.

Police officers allegedly pulled over the lawyer's vehicle by Joeten in Susupe.

No one was injured in the incident. Banes was arrested for DUI and other charges, according to sources.

As of press time yesterday, *Saipan Tribune* was still waiting for comments from Banes.

On Sept. 3, 2018, police officer

L. Lizama issued a traffic citation to Banes, for allegedly recklessly driving a red Toyota vehicle on Dandan Road at about 4:30pm.

Assistant attorney general Jonathan Robert Glass Jr. later agreed to remove the reckless driving offense in the citation and, instead, cited Banes with only an offense payable with a \$35 fine, including a \$10 court cost.

The amended citation charged Banes with "driving on right side exceptions."

Glass said the basis for amending the citation is that the government has reviewed the facts and circumstances and has a good faith belief that the charge is appropriately amended.

Banes then immediately paid the \$25 fine and \$10 in court costs and the case was closed.

AUSTERITY

From Page 1

said that employees who get paid through federal grants will be exempted from austerity, which includes no government offices on Fridays, i.e., Austerity Fridays.

"On all the federal programs, if you are federally funded and/or your department or division is not hampered by local revenue or the general revenue, then you will be exempted on the austerity, simply because we need those federal programs to continue to move forward," he said.

The governor's statement comes as positive news following last week's appeal by the House Committee on Federal and Foreign Affairs, chaired by Rep. Luis John DLG Castro (R-Saipan) for the administration to take all the necessary steps to retain and maximize every federal dollar the CNMI gets.

The committee has opposed any austerity measure that would involve cutting federally funded positions and programs, adding that "in these fiscally challenging times, we need these federal funds to continue flowing into our economy, generating revenue for our government and supporting critical jobs and public service."

In line with this, Torres said that his administration has been assessing measures that were done in the past during times of crisis, and seeing what can be altered, in the current austerity.

"In the past, for austerity measures, we actually just cut everybody across the board. Unless you're an essential, you're a sworn officer, other than that, even federal programs were cut across," he

said. "Today, we looked at...what can we do to make sure that our federal programs continue to move forward?"

The administration is also looking into the possibility of having a 100% federally funded department or division as an avenue where all other federally-funded employees from non-fully federally funded offices could clock in on an Austerity Friday.

"We're looking at a department or division that is 100% federally funded, both with renting or utility and staff. ...These are the avenue where other federal employees can come and register, or check in or clock in on that Friday, on austerity for example, so that they can maintain the program that they have [been] funded for," Torres said.

The governor also stated that there are federal programs offering to advance payments of salaries and expenditures, in an effort to help

alleviate the effects of the crisis in the CNMI.

"With government employees, if you work on 5% of your time on certain federal programs, we're going to write that letter to your grantor asking to pay for that 5%. ...If we can transfer as many as we can, from our government local account to federal accounts, then it helps alleviate our government costs," he said.

Aside from leveraging federally funded programs, the administration has also met with all departments to discuss possibilities of collaborating offices to close some of the offices, and do work in the community, as an austerity measure.

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) global outbreak has resulted in a drastic drop in the number of tourists coming to the CNMI.



Torres



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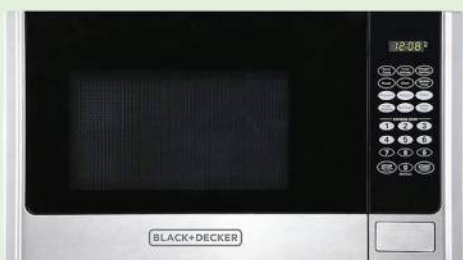
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Atalig, girlfriend want former OIG special agent on witness list

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig and his girlfriend, Evelyn Atalig, have asked the federal court to allow them add to a former special agent with the Office of the Inspector General to their list as an expert witness.

This developed as the jury trial of the Ataligs starts today, Tuesday, in the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

Efraim Atalig and Evelyn Atalig, through their counsels, David G. Banes and Steven P. Pixley, said that they intend to

call Dr. Gregory Vecchi as a witness regarding interviewing techniques and reporting involved in a criminal investigation.

In their joint motion to amend the witness list that was filed in court Friday, Banes and Pixley said that Vecchi has 19 years of experience working for the Federal Bureau of Investigation and has held various other professional positions related to criminal investigations, including as a special agent in the Office of the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Justice, investigating crimes involving

federal employees.

The lawyers said that Vecchi, if called to the witness stand, is expected to testify about the coercive and misleading effect of the way the government’s investigative agents used when interviewing witnesses in this case.

They said Vecchi is going to testify as to the unlikelihood of having multiple witnesses in the same case disputing the accuracies of an investigative agent’s summaries of interviews.

Vecchi will also testify about

an interview method used by the investigators in this case, including witness intimidation and videotaping only some but not all interviews.

Banes and Pixley acknowledged that they did not include Vecchi on their witness list last Tuesday. They stated that the need for Vecchi’s testimony arose only recently.

First, the defense counsel said, Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona denied defendants’ most recent motion for continuance just two days ago, which precluded any

chance that Efraim Atalig may be able to call the co-defendants in the CNMI case to testify as to, among others, the inaccuracies of interview reports in this case.

Second, the lawyers said, the underlying materials prompting the need for the expert were provided only recently, and the defense team needed time to research and analyze them before they were able to determine an expert was necessary.

The lawyers said now is two weeks before the expected testimony of Vecchi and the prosecution can call its own expert witness even

later, during its rebuttal.

In the federal court case, the charges against Efraim and Evelyn Atalig involve at least eight trips taken by the couple at different times in 2018 to Guam, Palau, the U.S. mainland, South Korea, and Saipan.

The Ataligs are being charged jointly with wire fraud, theft concerning programs involving federal funds, and conspiracy to commit wire fraud and federal funds theft.

In the Superior Court case, the OAG charged Efraim Atalig and the seven co-defendants with misconduct in public office. The bench trial will be on March 20.

CUC service interruptions


There will be a scheduled water service interruption on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, from 8:30am to 12:30pm in Gualo Rai Road, from the Middle Road intersection toward Beach Road (near the True Value Hardware).

The scheduled water interruption is due to the installation of a service lateral for the new federal courthouse building located in Gualo Rai.


Also, there will be a scheduled water service interruption on Thursday, March 12, 2020, from 8:30am to 4:30pm from the Chalan Monsignor Guerrero traffic light intersection to Chalan Monsignor Martinez, to the As Lito Road intersection.

The scheduled water service interruption is due to a leak on the northbound shoulder lane in front of Happy Market. **(PR)**

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
P.O. BOX 501370 SAIPAN, MP 96950



PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Sixteenth CNMI State Board of Education hereby gives notice that there will be a Special Board Meeting on Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 4:30 p.m. at the Marianas High School Cafeteria.

AGENDA¹

I. PRELIMINARY

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Adoption of Agenda

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS²

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Injunction

2. Commissioner of Education

3. Contingency Operating Budget for FY2020

4. 190-Day Contract for Teachers

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION³


1. Legal Updates

2. Personnel

3. Other matters

VI. DISCUSSION OF AGENDA FOR NEXT BOARD MEETING

VII. ADJOURNMENT




A Northern Mariana Islands Social Service
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

ONE (1) SHELTER WORKER

For more information, job description and application can be obtained from Karidat Main Office at Sister Remedios Community Center Chalan Kanoa.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED: Complete application form, copy of diploma, resume, current police clearance and a copy of valid CNMI driver’s license.

NO PHONE INQUIRIES PLEASE.
CLOSING DATE: FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2020 AT 4:00PM



PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB20-DPS-065
SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 25, 2020 09:00 A.M.
“PURCHASE OF TWENTY CLASS “I” VEHICLES
FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY”


COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.


THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ROBERT A. GUERRERO
COMMISSIONER, DPS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S





PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB20-DPW-EN-066
SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 25, 2020 09:30 A.M.
“PURCHASE OF ONE CLASS “G” VEHICLE FOR
THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, ENERGY DIVISION”


COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.


THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ THELMA B. INOS
DIRECTOR OF DPW/ENERGY

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S





PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB20-DPW/EN-067
SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 25, 2020 TIME: 10:00 A.M.
“PURCHASE OF ONE CLASS “F” VEHICLE FOR
THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, ENERGY DIVISION”


COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.


THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ THELMA B. INOS
DIRECTOR OF DPW/ENERGY

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S






PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
INVITATION TO BID (ITB)
ITB20-CHCC-OD2A-001
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: MARCH 11, 2020 TIME: 10:00 AM
“LEASE VEHICLE”

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)/INVITATION TO BID (ITB) FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO RFP’s TAB ON THE BOTTOM NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP/ITB. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORAZON P. ADA
CHCC DIRECTOR OF P&S



¹In the event that the items on the agenda are not completed, the meeting will recess and reconvene on the following day or at the most expeditious date and time determined by the Board.
²Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.
³Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

SCC now accepting scholarship applications

Applications are now being accepted for the Saipan Chamber of Commerce Educational Scholarship Fund.

Each year, scholarship recipients will receive a one-time award of at least \$1,000 to help defray the cost of their postsecondary education.

This annual tradition recognizes that the cost of postsecondary education is substantial and is the Saipan Chamber's goal to promote and enable post-secondary education for the students of the CNMI who display academic excellence, extracurricular success, leadership force and volunteerism within our community. This year, preferential consideration will be given to those whom meet the following criteria:

■ Students pursuing careers with the goal of solving problems related to the CNMI.

■ Students attending local institutions of higher education (i.e., Northern Marianas College and Northern Marianas Trade Institute).

■ Students interested in working within specific industries where we need U.S. qualified workers. These industries will vary year by year as the Saipan Chamber works with the CNMI Department of Labor to identify workforce gaps.

Eligibility and requirements are outlined in the official Chamber Scholarship Application Packets available on our website at www.saipanchamber.com/scholarship-program. Hard copies of the Chamber



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Photo shows previous recipients of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce Scholarship.

scholarship applications are available at the Saipan Chamber office and all Saipan high schools (see counselors). To be eligible for consideration, applicants must complete the application in its entirety and submit on or before 5pm on Friday, April 17, 2020, to the Chamber office on the third floor of the Marianas Business Plaza, Suite 315. Off-island students interested in submitting an application must be sent to P.O. Box 500806, Saipan MP 96950 and received by the due date.

For more information about the scholarship program, call the Chamber office at (670) 234-7150 or email coordinator2@saipanchamber.com. (PR)

NMI Democratic Party caucus down to 2

Last Friday, Sen. Elizabeth Warren ended her presidential campaign, narrowing the Democratic Party pool down to just two: former vice president Joe Biden, and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders.



Sanders

"I am so sad that she exited the race but I'm also confident that this won't be the last time we see her. She would make an excellent vice president and I think that time for giving women a seat for one or two of the highest positions in office have been long overdue," said NMI Democrat Marie Camacho.

This came shortly after former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg also ended his campaign after making history as the "billionaire that self-funded his entire campaign"—single-handedly outspending every presidential candidate, including incumbent President Donald Trump, and setting the bar for a presidential campaign Democrats have never seen before. He wasn't the only self-funded campaign, as millionaire Tom Steyer also ended his race a few days prior.

With the exception of Steyer, former presidential candidates Bloomberg, Pete Buttigieg, Amy Klobuchar, and Beto O'Rourke all endorsed Biden during last week's Super Tuesday primaries and caucuses. Based on last week's results Biden won 10 states including Texas, while Sanders won the largest prize of the night, California. As of today, both candidates are in a close race for the nomination, with Biden's delegate count of 610 versus Sanders'

count of 513.

Warren was advertised last week as one of three candidates on the NMI Caucus ballot but has since been removed with her exit announcement.

The real question on everyone's minds is who will she endorse: Biden or Sanders? Following her announcement last week, both candidates have reached out to her and both respect the time needed to make her decision.

"As we celebrate Women's Month here in the CNMI,

and International Women's Day today. I applaud Elizabeth Warren, Kamala Harris, Kirsten Gillibrand, Amy Klobuchar, Tulsi Gabbard, and Marianne Williamson—all Democratic presidential candidates willing to step up to the plate and run," said NMI Democratic Party chair Nola Kileman Hix.

"That's six women. Since 2018 we've seen a surge of women—diverse women from all ethnicities, backgrounds, and orientations



Biden

winning. Our neighboring island of Guam is a perfect example of women making history in politics, with them electing their first female governor, Lou Leon Guerrero, followed by the super majority of women in the House or, as they call it, the 'Guam Ladieslature.' The best part is—they're all Democrats," said the NMI Democratic Party in a statement Monday.

In 2018, *The New York Times* reported a total of 117 women elected in office:

100 Democrats, and 17 Republicans, and "regardless of party lines, I have never been more proud of this milestone," Hix said.

The March 14 presidential caucus will be the first step in the NMI's participation in this process. At the caucus, Democrats will elect delegates to attend the National Convention according to presidential preference group. The caucus will be held on Saipan at the Saipan World Resort's Taga Ballroom, with simultaneous sub-caucuses to be held at the Northern Marianas College on Tinian – Room C, (VTC Room) and Rota – Room B2 (VTC Room). Doors open at 5pm, with

doors closing for the caucuses to begin promptly at 6pm. NMI registered voters who would like to participate and register as members of the party are welcome and encouraged to attend. All NMI registered voters and persons who will be eligible to vote on or before Nov. 3, 2020, on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota will be able to visit the designated caucus voting sites and cast votes for their Democratic presidential candidate of choice. Visit www.nmidems.org for more information and don't miss the opportunity to participate in democracy and have a voice in choosing the next President of the United States. (PR)

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Susupe to pilot community garden project in the CNMI

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Susupe will be piloting the first-ever community garden project in the CNMI.

The community garden, a 600-square meter plot in Tramo Avenue, is a partnership between the village, the Board of Parole, the Department of Lands and Natural Resources, the Saipan Mayor's Office, and the Northern Marianas College-Cooperative Research Extension and Education Services.

Precinct 2 Rep. Tina Sablan

(Ind-Saipan) believes that the project will be a major point of pride for all residents of the Susupe village, and that the project is timely, given the economic challenges the CNMI is currently facing.

"There seems to be growing interest in people learning how to cultivate their own food. This community garden will be a good place to learn new skills and practice those skills, and enjoy the harvest, enjoy the fruits of our work," Sablan said.

The garden was prepared for the Susupe community by

the Board of Parole, as a way to integrate the parolees back into the community.

"We want the community to, instead of pushing them [parolees] out, we want them to take them in because they have changed. This is part of them giving to the community," said Board of Parole chair Ramon B. Camacho. "Once we develop this, we bring the community, we let them take over, then once a month, the college [NMC-CREES] will come in, the [DLNR] Division of Agriculture will come in to visit

the garden and assist the community on how to sustain and further improve it."

Camacho also said that the garden will also teach about food sustainability. "Especially with this crisis we are facing. If there's no shipment, and if we don't start this thing, what are we going to put on the table? Nothing," Camacho said, adding that as a producer himself, three benefits to being a farmer can be found: exercise, eating healthy, and profit.

The Saipan Mayor's Office will be removing the debris

around the garden to ensure that the crops are protected from vermin. DLNR forestry technician Pedro J. Tudela will be bringing into the Susupe community garden plants that are hard to find on Saipan, which he asks the village to protect.

DLNR and NMC-CREES will be helping the community facilitate polyculture and agroforestry into the garden, with agriculture research and extension agent Arnold Route helping the community build an agroforestry garden, emphasizing that food security is

in agroforestry.

"One of the other goal is to encourage people to do more backyard gardening at their own home. This community garden is available for people to learn and practice, but also to take those skills with them to their own yards... we're hoping [that the village] will really take ownership and take pride in this place and help maintain the garden and watch it thrive," Sablan said.

For more information, contact Polly Omechelang at 237-6843 or email efne@marianas.edu.

Bank of Guam donates \$5,000 to NMC Foundation

Bank of Guam recently donated \$5,000 to the Northern Marianas College Foundation.

The donation is part of the foundation's 16th Annual Foundation Open golf tournament, which is scheduled for Saturday, March 21, 2020. The bank's contribution to the event will go toward helping the college with its recovery efforts due to the devastating destruction of Super Typhoon Yutu, which practically destroyed more than 80% of NMC's campus grounds and classroom facilities.

"Bank of Guam is proud to support the college's mission and vision through its commitment to its students and be the driving force to improve the quality of life through higher education," said Marcie Tomokane, vice president/CNMI regional manager. "Investing in our local college not only strengthens the growth of our people and the economy, it paves the way for a better learning environment for our



Marcie Tomokane, Bank of Guam vice president/CNMI regional manager, is joined by other bank staff in presenting a \$5,000 check donation to NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico for the benefit of the Northern Marianas College Foundation.

NMC

future generations."

NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico is grateful Bank of Guam's support. "Our NMC family would like to

thank Bank of Guam for their dedication to funding higher education."

The 16th Annual NMC Foundation Open golf tournament

will be held on Saturday, March 21, 2020, at the Saipan Laolao Bay Golf & Resort (east course). Showtime is at 6am, and the shotgun start will

be at 7am. The tournament will follow a medal play format. First place winners in the men's Championship, A, B, C, Senior, and Ladies Flights

will each receive \$500, while \$300 and \$200 will go to the second and third place finishers, respectively. Hole-in-one prizes include a 2020 Kia Soul from Joeten Motors, and two \$5,000 hole-in-one prizes from McDonald's and Pacifica Insurance Underwriters Inc. The tournament will also feature many other items such as raffle prizes like airline tickets, meal gift certificates, gym memberships, and much more. Registration and payment can be made at Laolao Bay Golf & Resort or the NMC Cashier's Office. For sponsorship opportunities or registration information, visit marianas.edu or call 237-6833. (PR)

Regal donates to CCA



From left, Commonwealth Cancer Association executive director Juan L. Babauta, CCA board treasurer Cesar Dumatol, Regal Cinemas general manager William I. Santos Jr., and Regal Cinemas staff Lisel Galvan, Ruth Ann Torres, and Jasper Cain Duco. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Regal Cinemas and its charitable arm, the Regal Foundation, donated \$1,038.31 to the Commonwealth Cancer Association last Feb. 28 as the foundation's beneficiary for this year's local charity drive.

Regal Cinemas general

manager William I. Santos Jr. was joined by his staff in presenting the check donation to CCA treasurer Cesar Du-

matol, who accepted the donation on behalf of CCA board of directors and membership.

According to Santos and

supervisor Maybelline Nicdao, Regal Cinemas patrons can donate to the Regal Foundation through its large in-theater donation drive known as the "Stars of Hope" during the summer months every year. Hollywood Theaters in San Jose chose the CCA as this year's beneficiary.

CCA began as an alliance of volunteers in 2003, becoming formally chartered and incorporated in 2008. In 2009 the CCA achieved a tax-exempt status under 501 (c)(3). It provides direct financial assistance, assistance with nutritional supplements and other personal needs, as well as, certain types of medical equipment such as hospital beds, wheelchairs, and oxygen concentrators prescribed by a locally licensed physicians to qualifying clients in the CNMI who are receiving treatment for cancer.

CCA also facilitates monthly cancer survivors and care-

giver support group meetings, engages in a variety of awareness and outreach activities, and has produced various educational publications such as brochures, fliers, videos and DVDs. Awareness activities and events related to cervical cancer, oral cancer, colorectal cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, and lung and pancreatic cancer are just a few of the annual calendar of educational and outreach activities carried out by CCA. The CCA also engages in programs such as early screening and detection, and patient navigation. The CCA has partnered with seven of the CNMI's dental clinics, in order to see free oral cancer screenings for all ages.

For more information, contact CCA at 682-0050 or via email at ccamarianas@gmail.com, or visit www.ccamarianas.org. Or you can visit CCA office at the Gualo Rai Plaza Building along Middle Road in Gualo Rai. (PR)

OAG warns retailers: Price gouging is illegal

Consumers should be aware—and retailers are on notice—that it is illegal to engage in price gouging following a state of emergency.

This comes soon after Gov. Ralph DLG Torres issued a declaration of Significant Emergency on Jan. 29, 2020, and renewed on Feb. 28, 2020, as a result over the growing concerns of the coronavirus disease, or COVID-19.

The Consumer Protection Act makes it unlawful for businesses to engage in price gouging. Price gouging occurs when a business in-

creases prices based solely on a shortage of goods caused by a natural disaster or any other emergency. The Office of the Attorney General will prosecute, both criminally and civilly, any business that engages in price gouging.

The governor declared a price freeze pursuant to the Consumer Disaster Price Freeze Act on March 5, 2020, which will be in effect until he rescinds all declarations of emergency, disaster or price freeze.

It is illegal for any person or business to raise the price of any of the affected items while a price freeze is in effect. A violation of the Consumer Disaster Price Freeze Act is punishable by a \$10,000 fine and one year of imprisonment for each violation.

If you have information about price gouging, you should submit a written complaint to the Office of the Attorney General, along with copies of all receipts, invoices, or other documents associated with the complained-of transaction. Make sure to keep your original documents for your own records.

Complaint forms may be

obtained at www.cnmioag.org under the Consumer Protection section or in person at the Civil Division on Capital Hill from 7:30am to 4:30pm, Monday through Friday, or via email by sending a request to consumer_counsel@cnmioag.org. Complaints should be hand-delivered to the Civil Division on Capital Hill or submitted via email. **(OAG)**

PRICE FREEZE

The price of the following items are frozen:

1. Gasoline, kerosene, diesel fuel, natural gas, and all other chemical fuels, whether in gaseous, liquid, or solid form;
2. All foods and foodstuffs, including water, bottled water, beverages, and ice;
3. All clothing;
4. Flashlights, lamps, lanterns, candles, light bulbs, and other means of illumination;
5. Generators, cables, wires,

electrical batteries of every sort, and similar equipment for the generation and/or transmission of electrical power;

6. All appliances used in the storage and/or preparation of food, including, but not limited to, stoves, barbecue grilles, ovens, refrigerators, and coolers;
7. Tools typically used for construction, ground clearing, or home repairs, whether electrically powered, chemically powered, or manual, including, but

not limited to, saws, machetes, hammers, drills, shovels, rakes, and brooms;

8. All bedding items, including pillows, futons and blankets;
9. All medicines, medical equipment, and personal protective equipment, including but not limited to masks, gloves, and hand sanitizers;
10. All housing rentals including apartments and condominiums. **(OAG)**

Unable to afford rent, convicted tourist asks court to send him to prison at once

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An overstaying Chinese tourist who has been convicted of lying to federal authorities has asked the federal court to send him to prison at once as he is unable to afford rent and is relying on the generosity of fellow church members for assistance.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona granted Xinzhou Ren's request and sentenced him yesterday to four days of time-served, plus one year of supervised release. He was also ordered to report to immigration authorities for deportation.

The original sentencing date was June 4, 2020.

Last February, a federal jury found the 20-year-old Ren guilty of lying to U.S. Customs and Border Protection when he entered the CNMI.

Ren, through counsel Robert T. Torres, said that he is without resources and is destitute, having no lawful status in the CNMI and because of delays in his efforts to seek adjudication of his withholding of removal before the immigration court.

Torres said Ren is unable to obtain an Employment Authorization Document and cannot support himself any further. Torres said Ren wishes to start

serving the sentence that he expects the court to impose on him for his conviction. Torres said he has discussed this request and the U.S. government has indicated that it is considering recommending a sentence of six months (180 days).

It is Ren's desire to report to the Department of Corrections so that he may start getting credit toward any sentence imposed by the court. Once he completes his sentence he may then submit himself to and not contest his removal to mainland China without delay.

Ren requested for an expedited presentence investiga-

tion report.

Torres said it is Ren's view, as well as that of the U.S. government, that the jury trial bore out many of the facts regarding his background and history, including his education, employment, health, and family ties.

Torres said Ren is ready, willing, and able to commence serving time for the anticipated penalty for his conviction.

A complaint charged Ren with making false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Homeland Security Investigations filed the complaint.

The defendant has been released on his personal recognizance.

Assistant U.S. attorney Garth Backe prosecuted the case.

DHS Homeland Security Investigations special agent Nicole Sively stated in her affidavit in support of the criminal complaint, said she first encountered the defendant at the HSI Saipan Office last May 13.

Sively said records indicated that Ren was granted CNMI-Only Conditional Parole by U.S. Customs and Border Protection until May 15, 2018 and overstayed that authorized date.

Sively said during an administrative interview last May 13, Ren stated that he told the officers at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport that he was on Saipan as a visitor.


Sively said according to Ren he used that as an excuse because he wanted to escape China.

Ren stated he was not arrested in China, but was wanted by the police in Hebei Province, China in 2015.


Ren also allegedly stated that he left China because he was persecuted by his government due to his religion.

The defendant stated he feared he would be harmed if he returns to China.

Sively said Ren subsequently admitted he did not have such fear and was staying in the CNMI for other reasons.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-19-028, REV.1

REPLACEMENT OF SADOG TASI WWTP CLARIFIER

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Replacement of Sadog Tasi Clarifier Replacement in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The intent of the contract is for the Contractor to provide all labor, equipment, supplies and materials necessary to complete the scope of work which consists of installation of a new circular clarifier mechanism and replacement or repair of the effluent launder box; removal of the old circular clarifier mechanism and sections of the effluent launder box; replacement of the RFP weirs and scum baffle, installation of a new outer scum baffle; installation of new area lighting, wires, and conduit, and disconnect boxes; installation of a new process water spray system for foam control. The work shall include the dewatering and cleaning of aeration basin #3 and the clarifier; routing process flow and maintaining conditions during the construction period; and returning process flow from the aeration basin to the clarifier. The work shall be completed with minimal disruption to the daily operation of the Sadog Tasi Waste Water Treatment Plant. CUC requires the Project to be completed in 365 calendar days from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of **\$100.00** (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **March 12, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) Original and Five (5) Hard Copies of the bid MUST be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-19-028, Rev.1 Replacement of the Sadog Tasi Clarifier"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) April 2, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A **Bid Guarantee** of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A **Payment Bond** of one hundred (100%) percent and a **Performance Bond** of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract. All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on March 16, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Christie Sablan, CUC P&S, Purchasing Technician, Senior via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director




MANNY B. SABLAN, JR.
Purchasing Administrator

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

We only think we're in charge

We walk the Earth's crust, we erect vast cities, we boast of our achievements. We see ourselves as the mistresses and masters of our fate. Yet as John Lennon and other writers before him bluntly warned, life is what happens while we're busy making plans.

The little living form that now roils humanity is a virus, one among millions of infectious agents that roam this planet. As the coronavirus claims rising numbers of lives, we humans see ourselves as under siege: Like its kin, this virus is without discrimination in selecting its victims; great wealth has its privileges, but immunity from epidemics isn't one of them.

Thus does nature once again remind us who's boss. And thus must today's only human species, homo sapiens, live up to its name: in Latin, "wise man." Wisdom should dictate that we best survive nature's anomalous moments when we look out for one another — when our actions and precautions protect the common good. More succinctly, either we humans hang together or we'll hang alone.

All the sanitizers ever manufactured cannot isolate us from a pathogen that blithely travels among us, shrewdly dodging eradication while often stopping to replicate. We can, though, diminish this virus' impact on a club with 8 billion members via the choices each of us makes one by one: Every handshake that instead becomes a bow or a fist bump, every cough that's buried inside an elbow, every food surface that's routinely wiped clean, demonstrates one more personal commitment to everyone else's good health.

Think of coronavirus, then, not only as a nascent threat to human respiration but also as the latest eruption of nature that demands our urgent attention. Such eruptions, many of them terrifying, are always with us. Consider, for one example, the earthquake, a routine and sometimes devastating force. If you enrolled in Geology 101, chances are the prof quoted a maxim of early 20th century historian-philosopher Will Durant: "Civilization exists by geological consent, subject to change without notice."

Nature relentlessly pummels us with these lethal challenges. We can debate whether the Great Chicago Fire was of human or bovine origin, but it could occur only because warm, dry weather severely dehydrated the American Midwest in October 1871.

Human behavior is shaping modern climate extremes. But by nature's patient clock, such anomalies have been occurring for eons. Tornadoes and floods may shock us, but they shouldn't surprise us. It's because our human clocks run faster that we label as extraordinary whatever new-to-us event nature delivers during our brief time here.

In the category of health pandemics, the Spanish flu of 1918-19 has become today's go-to comparison for the still spreading coronavirus. In a time of comparatively little mobility, that century-ago disease took half a year to travel the globe. It infected one-third of the world's population, or some 500 million people. It killed perhaps 50 million, maybe 100 million. Nobody knows with any certainty. And within 18 months,

See WE on Next Page

I need you to
do me a favor,
though...
Get me some
dirt on
Biden...

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Sanders'
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A Taliban peace deal at what cost?

By **STAFFAN DE MISTURA**, **MARGOT WALLSTROM**,
and **SAHAR HALAIMZAI**

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Over the last year, Afghans watched as the Trump administration negotiated with the Taliban, while excluding the Afghan government, the people, civil society and, in particular, Afghan women.

The sequencing and opaqueness of this process raised alarm bells from the start, but many in the international community trusted that any deal the U.S. signed with the Taliban would not reignite another cycle of violence or a return to the severe human rights abuses and oppression of women that previously occurred under Taliban rule.

That was before we saw the terms of the deal. It's now clear that the plan contains no meaningful provision for the protection of women and the constitutional rights that underline it. It doesn't condition the pullout of U.S. troops on a permanent ceasefire or a successful intra-Afghan agreement.

It does, however, call for the release of 5,000 Taliban prisoners before peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban begin on March 10, undercutting any leverage the government might have. Not surprisingly, President Ashraf Ghani of Afghanistan has said that's not a promise the U.S. can make and that it won't happen before negotiations start.

On March 2, the Taliban indicated that it would return to fighting against the Afghan government. Unless the talks can be recalibrated, the opportunity for peace will be squandered. The current process, which began without the inclusion of women or their elected government, has, in fact, put all the progress made in Afghanistan at risk.

Over the last 18 years, Afghans have worked hard to build political, social and economic institutions. Although serious challenges remain, a recent Asia Foundation Survey of the Afghan People shows that 65% of Afghans trust the way in which their democracy works. In sharp contrast, only 6% strongly sympathize with the Taliban's political project.

In the last two decades, Afghan girls and women have experienced remarkable change. In 2001, only 500,000 boys attended school. Today, 9 million boys and girls are being educated. Women went from being virtually erased under Taliban rule to becoming policewomen, teachers, public officials, mayors and entrepreneurs. In 2019, women accounted for 28% of the Afghan parliament—a proportion higher than 67% of countries tracked by the World Bank. They will not go back.

The majority of Afghan citizens stand behind them: 65% of citizens say they are not willing to sacrifice women's education or their right to work outside their home. They also want a strong

central government to protect these rights.

But these principles were apparently ignored by the American and Taliban negotiators. President Trump wants to end the war, and most Afghans don't want a permanent presence of foreign troops. But it's far from clear if the deal can create the conditions for a real peace—or if it's largely a road map for an American exit.

Much of the fear and uncertainty felt across the country was heightened by a process that was secretive and exclusive, one that raised the specter of an interim government, threatening the country's hard-won democratic institutions. If the government's talks with the Taliban fail, it would be wrong to blame the Afghan people when they and the government were actively excluded from the process that set this stage.

The way forward will require broad political support from all of Afghan society. Only a democratically elected government will be able to carry out the concessions needed, whether that's releasing prisoners, reforming the armed forces or protecting refugees or former fighters as they return to their homes. To achieve lasting stability, it's imperative that women be included at the negotiating table. For its part, the Taliban must also provide a seat for women on its side of the table. Inclusivity means involving those with the most at stake in the process.

It's also important to reconcile the Taliban to the changes that have occurred in Afghan society over the last two decades. Taliban leaders must understand the financial and political consequences of their positions. Over the last year, the U.S.-Taliban talks have been predicated on the idea that the Taliban has changed. The Taliban will have to demonstrate that change through actions, not promises without practical guarantees.

The international community must also play its part to ensure that the terms of any agreement actually sustain peace and represent the will of the Afghan people. The deputy leader of the Taliban, Sirajuddin Haqqani, has said that Afghanistan will need continued assistance from the international community. If the U.S., the European Union and others are to continue to invest in Afghanistan's development and institutions, they must ensure that progress on women's rights is not rolled back and the constitutional order is preserved.

This is a historic moment that could bring an end to nearly two decades of war. But peace can't be achieved unless the voices of Afghan women and civil society leaders are central to the talks. We should listen to them.

Staffan De Mistura is a former United Nations under-secretary-general and U.N. special envoy for Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon. Margot Wallstrom is a former foreign minister and deputy prime minister of Sweden. Sahar Halaimzai, an Afghan British human rights advocate, currently leads the Afghan campaign Time4RealPeace.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Wills: 7 bequest mistakes

Editor's Note: The following column is being republished to post it in its correct weekday slot; it was erroneously published in yesterday's paper.

Almost everyone should have a will or a revocable living trust that says what happens to their stuff when they die. But not all documents are equal. A thoughtful, well-drafted plan can ensure that your goals are met with a minimum of fuss for your loved ones. But a poorly written estate plan can bury landmines for years or decades, mines waiting to explode when you pass away. Below are seven common mistakes to avoid in your will.

Mistake 1: Being too specific when flexibility is necessary

Let's say you own a 2020 Toyota Tacoma, and you want your son, Bob, to have it when you pass away. So your will says something like: I bequeath my 2020 Toyota Tacoma to Bob. What happens if you sell the Tacoma but never update your will? Bob gets nothing.

What about your house? What if you lived at 123 Plumeria Drive when you made your will but sold it so that you could move across the road to 124 Plumeria Drive? Then a bequest saying that you leave 123 Plumeria Drive to Bob would fail because you no longer own it.

How about bank accounts? What if you bequeathed your Bank of Saipan account to Bob and then Bank of Saipan merged with the Bank of Hawaii? Bob may be out of luck because the account doesn't match your will precisely.

And the same for stock certificates: If you bequest 10 shares of ABC, Inc.'s stock and then it merges into another company, thus changing its name to XYZ Corp., Bob may be out of luck again for the same reason—it doesn't match your will precisely.

In short, be careful about getting too specific. The language you use should have some wiggle room for the natural ebb and flow of life because changes will happen. It's one of the few guarantees in life.

Mistake 2: Giving away property without talking about the mortgage

Now let's assume you own property encumbered by a mortgage. When you bequeath the property to Bob, did you intend for him to pay for the mortgage? Or did you want your estate to pay off the mortgage? If your will doesn't say, then your other heirs will likely object to the estate paying off the mortgage. After all, those payments dilute how much the rest of the heirs will receive. To prevent the fight, say who is responsible for the mortgage—the estate or the person receiving the property.

Mistake 3: Giving away a house without saying who gets the contents

Let's say the will gifts the house to Bob but is silent on the stuff in-

side the house. Who gets the contents of the home? Not clear. Bob may get everything. Or he might get an empty house without carpets, blinds, appliances, or furniture. It's much better to expressly state who gets the contents of the house—Bob or someone else.

Mistake 4: Giving someone a percentage of the estate's value

Sometimes people give a percentage of their estate to someone. Often, it will be a grandparent who wants to give a small percentage to a grandkid. Why is that a bad idea? Because determining the total value of an estate is hard and inexact. And, so, reasonable differences over an appraisal can flash into heated arguments.

If you want to leave a percentage, what should you do instead? Leave a percentage of something easy to determine like a bank or retirement account. Figuring out 2% of a bank account is much easier than figuring out 2% of your estate (which can include cars, collectibles, real estate, and bank accounts).

Mistake 5: Leaving a large, fixed amount to younger heirs

This situation crops up most where grandparents want to leave a fixed amount for their grandkids' education. For example, a grandparent leaves \$50,000 each to three grandkids. The idea is great. But what happens, for instance, if the stock market plummets, sinking your estate's value with it? Not only is there not enough money for the grandkids' education funds, your kids get nothing. In most cases, that is not what a well-meaning grandparent intended. So, be wary of making large, specific bequests.

Mistake 6: Leaving significant assets directly to minors

Leaving big amounts of money directly to minors is bad on several fronts. For one, they are seldom ready to handle a surprise windfall. For another, their inheritance will be supervised by the legal system until they become an adult. So, they can look for-

Stop pooh-poohing coronavirus worries

The White House has been walking into a coronavirus trap.

By pooh-poohing worries about the virus and saying everything is under control, it is setting itself up for the charge, if things get even a little bad, that it was self-deluding and overly complacent.

Although President Trump has recently struck a better tone, he's been a chief offender, wanting to downplay the virus for fear it will continue to suppress a stock market that has experienced vertiginous drops.

This is exactly the wrong approach. The moment doesn't call for market-reassuring Trump, but threats-aren't-getting-past-our-borders Trump, not Dow 30,000 Trump, but drawbridge-and-moat Trump.

Everything should be geared toward overreacting now, when the threat in the U.S. is still in prospect, instead of later, when circumstances may be beyond anyone's direct control.

That means appointing a point person for the coronavirus response with a medical background, who doesn't already have a full-time job, like current designee Mike Pence. The right pick could provide genuine expertise in public health and the workings of government, as well as being a reliable source of public information.

It means erring on the side of further travel restrictions, even if it will be impossible to exclude infected people from the United States, given its break out from China to countries all around the world.

It means not quibbling with Congress over coronavirus funding, with even Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy saying the administration's \$2.5 billion request is "a little low" (Trump has signaled a willingness to accept more).

It means making sure that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is working at maximum efficiency to make coronavirus tests widely available, which is the most worrisome shortfall in the federal response so far, and that government agencies are doing everything possible to push the development and deploy-

FINE PRINT

By **JORDAN SUNDELL**

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Jordan Sundell is a lawyer primarily practicing business, real estate, estate-planning, and asset-protection law. He formerly worked for the CNMI Supreme Court and Bridge Capital and is now general counsel for several real-estate companies, including JZ Group. His columns—focused mainly on real estate, small business, and estate planning—are published every other Tuesday. Be sure to like the Fine Print on Facebook!

ward to going in and out of guardianship proceeds for the rest of their youth. I don't recommend it.

A better choice is to leave assets to minors through a trust. This approach allows you to appoint someone responsible who can then access your kid's inheritance and use it on their behalf without parading in and out of court for each major decision.

Mistake 7: Leaving assets to people receiving government benefits

Many government benefits are means-tested. In other words, people only receive them if they have limited assets. And that threshold can be very small. So, it's relatively easy for an unexpected inheritance to knock a person out of their government benefits until they've spent the inheritance and re-filed for benefits. In many cases, they would have been better off never receiving any inheritance.

To avoid these mistakes, and others, have an experienced estate-planning attorney write your will.

This column is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be taken as legal advice. For your specific case, consult a lawyer.

By **RICH LOWRY**

King Features Synd., Inc.



Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

ment of a vaccine.

Finally, it means coordinating with localities, as warranted, on ways to slow the spread of the virus via "social distancing," or the avoidance of large gatherings and public transportation.

The coronavirus is not a modern-day plague. Many people infected will experience only mild symptoms, and it's not as deadly as SARS or Middle East respiratory syndrome.

Yet, it is not a creation of the fake news, either. It has hobbled one of the most important counties in the world, China, and is shutting down towns in Italy. There are now more new cases outside of China than inside it. The virus has killed nearly 3,000 people.

If it gets loose in the United States, there could well be a panic that in itself would be damaging to the social fabric and the economy.

Maybe none of this comes to pass, but it's better to be overly prepared and vigilant than play to catch up.

Besides, the political valence of the coronavirus crisis should be favorable to Trump's worldview. It demonstrates a downside of globalization and shows the importance of borders. It is an object lesson in our overdependence on a China that is dictatorial, dishonest and poorly governed.

The president shouldn't shrug off the threat in the hopes of talking up the stock market. If his team responds effectively, the Dow will take care of itself.

WE

From Page 10






Spanish flu disappeared as inexplicably as it had appeared.

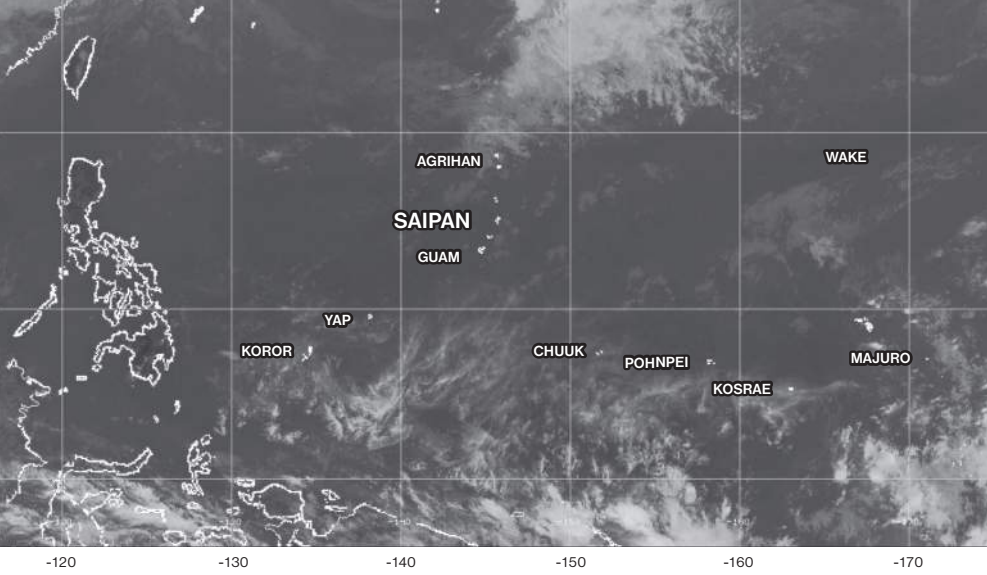
We have no idea what today's coronavirus has in store for us. Modern sanitation practices are more protective than those of a century ago, yet our world also is more densely settled. And even if a vaccine or other intervention thwarts today's virus, in time another will come along to menace us.

In our relative frailty, we humans are better suited to respect and try to adapt to nature's assaults than we ever will be to eliminate them. Respect, and then do what we can to limit their spread and treat their victims.

The mundane precautions we take to protect ourselves and one another against coronavirus aren't fail-safe. They do, though, give us today's best chance of surviving one more of nature's perennial reminders: We're the Earth's stewards, its temporary tenants. But we don't run the place.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
									
Partly cloudy. A slight chance of light showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.		Partly cloudy. A slight chance of light showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.		Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.		Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.		Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.	
88°	76°	88°	76°	88°	76°	88°	76°	88°	76°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 6:34 AM, MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A very dry trade-wind pattern continues across the region this morning. Latest sounding and model guidance indicate a very dry mid- to upper-level across the islands. Therefore, any showers that do develop will likely be short-lived and produce only light rain. Models continue to indicate a weak disturbance moving through the region Thursday night or Friday. This may bring a slight increase in showers, though the amount of moisture available will be very limited. This system is not expected to bring much, though a couple hundredths of an inch are possible.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	86° / 76°	
Palau	Partly Cloudy	85° / 78°	
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°	
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	87° / 81°	
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°	
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°	
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°	

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Showers	70° / 61°	
Beijing	Sunny	55° / 32°	
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	72° / 66°	
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	80° / 66°	
London	Windy	61° / 48°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	70° / 55°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	91° / 79°	
Melbourne	Sunny	82° / 63°	
Miami	Windy	74° / 70°	
New York	Mostly Sunny	64° / 49°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	57° / 43°	
Paris	Showers	57° / 54°	
Busan	Sunny	55° / 36°	
Rome	Partly Cloudy	64° / 39°	
Salem	Cloudy	71° / 57°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	65° / 49°	
Seoul	Sunny	46° / 27°	
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	64° / 45°	
Washington, DC	Showers	70° / 47°	



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
2:02 AM	HIGH TIDE	-0.33	
8:32 AM	LOW TIDE	1.96	
2:27 PM	HIGH TIDE	0.61	
7:59 PM	LOW TIDE	2.05	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:28 AM	6:26 PM
Wednesday	6:27 AM	6:26 PM
Thursday	6:26 AM	6:26 PM
Friday	6:26 AM	6:26 PM
Saturday	6:25 AM	6:27 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	6:49 AM	7:04 PM
Wednesday	-	7:37 AM	8:05 PM
Thursday	-	8:23 AM	9:05 PM
Friday	-	9:10 AM	10:05 PM
Saturday	-	9:58 AM	11:05 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 6, 2020							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA156	6:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	UA112	4:45pm	5:26pm	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY816	4:35pm	7:30pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	SKY811	10:15am	3:00pm	Daily
SKY816	5:05pm	8:00pm	6				
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:20am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:30am+1	3
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:05am	6:05am	Daily	OZ6233	7:30am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6
OZ626	2:10am	6:05am	1	OZ623	8:10am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ626	3:35am	7:20am	4	TW309	11:10am	4:40pm	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:35am	Daily	OZ625	7:30pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ6243	3:10pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	TW307	7:45pm	1:05am+1	Daily
OZ624	3:30pm	7:20pm	1, 3, 5, 7	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	OZ625	9:05pm	2:25am+1	3
TW310	5:40pm	10:15pm	Daily	7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:35am	1 via ICN	UA189/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:35am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR	OZ702/625	12:05pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
UA156/183	6:20pm	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	UA192/174	10:40pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA156/193	6:20pm	11:50pm	2 via GUM-ROR	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3 via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ746/6233	12:35am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ746/623	12:35am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
OZ626/721	3:35am	11:50am	4 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ6243/9661	3:10pm	11:15pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ624/9661	3:30pm	11:15pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, BC SkyMark ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)							
STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily	1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily	1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily	1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily	1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily	1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily	1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily	2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily	2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily	2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily	2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
				2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
				2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
				2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
				2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

United adjusts flight schedules for Guam



UNITED AIRLINES
Due to the decline in demand resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak, United Airlines has revised its Guam flight schedules.

GUAM—United Airlines announced yesterday that it will be making adjustments to its Guam flight schedules due to the decline in demand resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak in the region. This adjustment comes after the recent announcement that United is taking additional steps

» Adjusted schedules to Japan, Palau, Saipan, Micronesia begin end of March

to reduce its international and domestic schedules as a result of the weakened demand. The adjusted schedule will be effective at the end of March through the end of April.

United also announced that the Island Hopper will operate on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from March 29 through April 27. The Wednesday flight will not be landing in Kwajalein between April 1 and 30.

Sam Shinohara, United managing director for airport operations for Asia/Pacific said, “As a result of the decline in demand for travel in our region, United is temporarily adjusting our flight schedules for Guam. We are monitoring the situation closely and are committed to working with the visitors bureaus and stakeholders in the region to rebuild demand for travel and return to normal operations as soon as possible.”

Given the high level of uncertainty regarding travel, United is working to give customers more flexibility by waiving change fees for any booking – domestic or international – made between March 3 and March 31. The waiver applies to all tickets, all fare types, all destinations, all points-of-sale and all travel dates available for sale. For

more information visit <https://www.united.com/ual/en/us/fly/travel/notices.html>. United customers can contact united.com, United reservations at 1-800-UNITED-1 (1-800-864-8331), their travel agent, or United’s City Ticket Office in Guam for assistance with their flights.

Shinohara added, “We will continue to communicate closely with our partners, our island’s leaders, and our customers to keep them informed of any changes that may arise. We thank our customers for their understanding and continued support.”

The impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak continues to evolve rapidly. The safety of our customers and employees is and always will be our top priority.

United teams are in daily contact with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), federal agencies and other global health organizations to share the most up-to-the-minute information. What’s more, United has a team of in-house medical experts, including an industrial hygienist who reviews and tests cleaning products and a corporate medical team who are on-call, around the

clock. United also partners with MedAire, an organization that gives crewmembers ready access to an emergency department doctor for advice and assistance.

The dynamic nature of this outbreak requires United to be nimble and flexible in how it responds, provides service, and protects our customers and employees. Here are some of the ways we are taking action.

Aircraft cleaning

All aircraft are cleaned at a variety of touchpoints throughout the day.

The cleaning procedure for flights includes a thorough wipe-down of all hard surfaces touched by customers and employees — lavatories, galleys, tray tables, window shades and armrests.

United uses an effective, high-grade disinfectant and multi-purpose cleaner.

When we are advised by the CDC of an employee or customer who has traveled onboard and who is potentially exhibiting coronavirus symptoms, that aircraft is taken out of service and sent through a full decontamination process that includes our standard cleaning procedures plus washing ceilings and overhead bins and scrubbing

Guam (GUM) – Narita, Japan (NRT) – Effective April 2 - 30, 2020				
Airport (from/to)	Flight No.	Frequency	Aircraft	
Guam	UA828	Daily except 4/2, 4/5, 4/8, 4/11, 4/14, 4/17, 4/20, 4/23, 4/26, 4/29	B737	
	UA196	Daily, except 4/6, 4/9, 4/12, 4/15, 4/18, 4/21, 4/24, 4/27, 4/30	B737	
	UA873	Daily except 4/4, 4/7, 4/10, 4/13, 4/16, 4/19, 4/22, 4/25, 4/28	B737	
Narita	UA827	Daily except 4/2, 4/5, 4/8, 4/11, 4/14, 4/17, 4/20, 4/23, 4/26, 4/29	B737	
	UA197	Daily, except 4/6, 4/9, 4/12, 4/15, 4/18, 4/21, 4/24, 4/27, 4/30	B737	
	UA874	Daily except 4/4, 4/7, 4/10, 4/13, 4/16, 4/19, 4/22, 4/25, 4/28	B737	

Guam (GUM) – Nagoya, Japan (NGO) – Effective March 31 – April 30, 2020				
Airport (from/to)	Flight No.	Frequency	Aircraft	
Guam	UA 137	3 times weekly – Mon., Fri. Sun.	B737	
	UA 171	Daily		
Nagoya	UA 136	3 times weekly – Mon., Fri. Sun.	B737	
	UA 172	Daily		

Guam (GUM) – Osaka, Japan (KIX) – Effective March 31 – April 30, 2020				
Airport (from/to)	Flight No.	Frequency	Aircraft	
Guam	Osaka	UA 151	Daily	
Osaka	Guam	UA 150	Daily	

Guam (GUM) – Koror, Palau (ROR) – Effective March 30 – April 29, 2020				
Airport (from/to)	Flight No.	Frequency	Aircraft	
Guam	Koror	UA 157	Sun., Thurs.	
	UA 193	Tues., Fri.	B737	
Koror	Guam	UA 158	Mon, Fri.	
	UA 192	Wed., Sat.	B737	

Guam (GUM) – Saipan (SPN) – Effective March 30 – April 30, 2020				
Airport (from/to)	Flight No.	Frequency	Aircraft	
Guam	Saipan	UA 174	Daily	
Saipan	Guam	UA 117	Daily	

the interior. United aircraft are equipped with state-of-the-art circulation systems, similar to those found in hospitals, which use a high-efficiency (HEPA) filter to circulate the air and removes up to 99.7% of airborne particles.

Soon, we will start using an electrostatic fogger to disinfect the air and surfaces within the cabin on all international arrivals into our U.S. Hubs, Honolulu and Guam.

In flight

To limit person-to-person contamination, we have instituted the following procedures on board:

- We have stopped refilling used cups and glasses in all cabins. If a customer requests a refill, our flight attendants will provide a new cup or glass.
- Customers may now see flight attendants wearing gloves during food and beverage service as well as during pickup, in all cabins.
- Our flight attendants will hand all beverages directly to the customer, instead of allow-

ing the customer to take their own from the tray.

- All tableware, dishes, cutlery, carts and glassware are washed and sanitized.
- We’ve added supplies for our crews on segments flown to Alert Level 2 zones and upward: gloves, masks, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, sani-com wipes, foaming hand soap, and disinfectant wipes as supply becomes available.

In airports

- Providing hand sanitizer for use in our crew and break rooms, lounges and gates.
- Ensuring regular disinfection of common surfaces inside our airport terminals.

What you can do

- According to the CDC, the National Safety Council, and the WHO:
- Wash your hands often – and thoroughly – with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
 - Alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content is a good secondary option
 - Cover your nose and

- mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth and eyes with unwashed hands
- Use gloves and masks as needed
- Get a flu shot if you haven’t already
- If you’re sick – stay home

How to stay informed

For more detailed information about COVID-19, how it spreads and prevention and treatment please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>

Also, the CDC has updated their country index page where you can find up-to-date COVID-19 risk assessments by country.

Every customer. Every flight. Every day.

United continues to strengthen its commitment to its customers, looking at every aspect of its business to ensure that the carrier keeps customers’ best interests at the heart of its service. In addition to today’s announcement, United recently:

- Announced that MileagePlus award miles will never expire
- Committed \$40 million toward a new investment initiative focused on accelerating the development of sustainable aviation fuels and other decarbonization technologies
- Established Miles on a Mission, a first-of-its-kind crowdsourcing platform which gives customers a simple way to donate miles to non-profit organizations and charities in need of air travel
- Launched Connection-Saver, a digital tool dedicated to improving the experience for customers with connecting flights
- Instituted PlusPoints, new upgrade benefits for MileagePlus Premier members
- Gave Economy customers a choice of complimentary snacks on domestic flights
- Made DIRECTV free for every customer on more than 200 aircraft. (PR)

Anxiety grips companies across the world as virus spreads

WASHINGTON (AP)—Since breaking out of China, the coronavirus has breached the walls of the Vatican. It’s struck the Iranian holy city of Qom and contaminated a nursing home in Seattle. And around the world, it’s carrying not just sickness and death but also the anxiety and paralysis that can smother economic growth. From Florida, where the CEO of a toy maker who can’t

get products from Chinese factories is preparing layoffs, to Hong Kong, where the palatial Jumbo Kingdom restaurant is closed, businesses are struggling. The virus has grounded a British airline, and it’s sunk a Japanese cruise-ship company. The cumulative damage is mounting. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development this week slashed its forecast for global growth

for this year to 2.4% from 2.9%. It warned that Japan and the 19 European countries that share the euro currency are in danger of recession. Italy may already be there. Capital Economics expects the Chinese economy to shrink 2% in the January-March quarter and to grow as little as 2% for the year. That would be a disastrous and humiliating comedown for an economy that deliv-

ered a sizzling 9% average annual growth rate from 2000 through last year. The bleak outlook and nagging uncertainties about how severe the damage will be have shaken financial markets. The Dow Jones industrial average, gyrating wildly from day to day, has plummeted nearly 12% over the past month. “The virus is going to go on, and it’s going to impact a lot of countries and econo-

mies,” said Sondra Mansfield, who owns Chalk of the Town in New York City, which makes T-shirts and tote bags that children can write on with chalk. With global supply chains disrupted by quarantines and travel restrictions, Mansfield worries about maintaining access to the supplies she needs—T shirts from India and Honduras and markers from Japan. “I think it will get worse before it gets better,” she said.

Nation

California prepares to dock cruise ship with 21 virus cases

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—As the U.S. death toll from the new coronavirus reached at least 21, California Gov. Gavin Newsom and the mayor of Oakland sought Sunday to reassure the public that none of the passengers from a ship carrying people with the virus will be released into the public before undergoing a 14-day quarantine.

The Grand Princess carrying more than 3,500 people from 54 countries is expected to dock Monday in Oakland, in the east San Francisco Bay, and was idling off the coast Sunday as officials prepared a port site. Those

needing acute medical care will come off first.

"This is a time that we must be guided by facts and not fears, and our public deserves to know what's going on," Mayor Libby Schaaf said.

On Sunday, the U.S. State Department issued an advisory against travel on cruise ships. "U.S. citizens, particularly travelers with underlying health conditions, should not travel by cruise ship," the department said in a statement on its website. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "notes increased risk of infection of COVID-19 in a cruise ship environment."

Meanwhile, the number of infections in the United States climbed above 500 as testing for the virus increased.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the National Institutes of Health's allergy and infectious diseases chief, said Sunday that widespread closure of a city or region, as Italy has done, is "possible."

"You don't want to alarm people, but given the spread we see, you know anything is possible and that's the reason why we've got to be prepared to take whatever action is appropriate to contain and mitigate the outbreak," Fauci said on "Fox News Sunday."

U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams said communities will need to start thinking about canceling large gatherings, closing schools and letting more employees work from home, as many companies have done in the Seattle, Washington, area amid an outbreak at a care home that has killed 18.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown declared a state of emergency Sunday after the number of confirmed cases there doubled from the previous day to 14.

On the Grand Princess, Donna LaGessee and her sister-in-law Jackie Eilers had a small celebration in their

cabin Saturday night after the captain announced the ship would soon dock. She said they're maintaining a positive attitude, watching exercise videos and re-runs of "The Love Boat."

"We're keeping our senses of humor. We're laughing at the whole situation," said LaGessee, 64, of Greenville, North Carolina. "We're lucky because we have a room with a balcony so we can get some fresh air."

Fellow passengers Steven and Michele Smith of Paradise, California, said they hope their time spent on the ship in quarantine will count toward the 14-day quarantine period on land, but they said officials have not yet

provided an answer.

"We would love to get credit for the three or four days we've spent in our cabin," Steven Smith said.

Beginning around 2 p.m. Sunday, authorities began taking passengers out of their cabins for escorted walks to get fresh air on the port deck.

They are starting with people from the interior cabins without windows, Steven Smith said, although they could not see the people and could not be sure how long the free periods lasted.

The Smiths do not know when their exercise period will occur or how long it will last. "If they let me out of my room I wouldn't want to come back," Smith joked.



Carrying multiple people who have tested positive for COVID-19, the *Grand Princess* maintains a holding pattern about 30 miles off the coast of San Francisco, Sunday, March 8, 2020.

Despite virus risk, 2020 hopefuls keep up campaigns for now

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (AP)—As the coronavirus hits more states, Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders said Sunday his campaign is gauging when it may become necessary to cancel the large campaign rallies that public health experts say could be breeding grounds to spread the potentially deadly illness.

"Obviously what is most important to us is to protect the health of the American people," Sanders said as he appeared in a series of TV interviews. "And what I will tell you, we are talking to public health officials all over this country."

"This is an issue that every organization, every candidate has got to deal with," he said.

Federal health authorities have been advising older

people and those with medical conditions, in particular, to avoid crowded spaces, prompting the cancellation of music and arts festivals and other events around the country. On Sunday, Surgeon General Jerome Adams noted that the average age of death for people from the coronavirus is 80, while for those needing medical attention, it is 60.

But that so far hasn't led President Donald Trump or his two remaining major Democratic rivals, Sanders and Joe Biden, to cut back on big campaign events. Each man is in his 70s.

Sanders said "in the best of all possible worlds" the three candidates should probably limit their travel and avoid crowds, "but right now, we're running as hard as we can."

Sanders planned a meeting Monday in Detroit with public health experts and others to discuss the outbreak.

The Biden campaign said Sunday the former vice president was following the guidance of state and federal health experts on the outbreak, but there were no planned changes to his campaign activities.

Trump on Saturday said he wasn't worried about the coronavirus getting closer to the White House after the first case in the nation's capital was confirmed over the weekend. Officials also said an attendee of a recent political conference where Trump himself had spoken also tested positive for the virus.

"No, I'm not concerned at all. No, I'm not. We've done a great job," Trump said.

Trump campaign communi-

cations director Tim Murtaugh said Sunday the campaign is proceeding as normal. "We announce rallies when we are ready to announce rallies," he said. "The consideration is always the president's schedule and what states the president wants to target."

Adams, acknowledging Trump's busy public schedule, said for many Americans "life can't stop" and that ultimately the goal was to minimize risk the best as possible.

"But speaking of being at risk, the president, he sleeps less than I do, and he's healthier than what I am," he said. "And so that's the other reason that this messaging is hard, because there are 70-year-olds who run marathons and are healthier than some 30-year-olds."

ACROSS THE NATION

Police: Man killed sleeping couple, buried bodies in swamp

HAINES CITY, Fla.

(AP)—A Florida man was arrested Saturday after he killed a married couple while they slept and enlisted his stepdaughter to help bury the bodies in a swamp, authorities said. The Polk County Sheriff's office started getting strange calls last week about a 19-year-old woman trying to sell a truck for \$200. When asked about the low price, she told buyers the owner didn't need it anymore, authorities said. Sheriff Grady Judd said that's because Raymond Cline, 33, and Crystal Ann Cline, 37, were dead. No one had seen the couple since Feb. 21. Investigators went to the home of Amberlyn Nichols after she tried to sell Cline's truck. Judd said Nichols admitted she and her boyfriend helped her stepfather hide the bodies in the backyard and led investigators to two decomposing bodies in the swampy woods. Todd Jackson was charged with two counts of first-degree murder. Nichols said her stepfather was angry because Raymond Cline owed him money. Authorities said he broke into their home and shot them both in the head while they slept. It was not immediately clear whether Jackson had an attorney who could comment.

Milwaukee bar fight shooting leaves 1 dead, 3 injured

MILWAUKEE (AP)—A shooting that erupted during a bar fight in Milwaukee early Sunday has killed one man and injured three

others, police said. Police said the fight broke out inside the bar just before 2 a.m. Sunday and resulted in multiple people firing shots at each other, both inside and outside of the bar. A 31-year-old man died at the scene. Another 31-year-old man is in critical condition. A 34-year-old man is being treated for a graze wound. A 26-year-old man suspected of being involved is being treated after he showed up at a hospital with several gunshot wounds. He is in custody while police continue to investigate. Police did not release the name of the bar, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported.

13-year-old dead, 5 others injured in Baltimore-area gunfire

A 13-year-old boy was killed and four other children injured in a shooting as they left an event at a Maryland shopping center early Sunday morning, authorities said. A 19-year-old man also was injured when gunfire broke out shortly after midnight Sunday in Rosedale, according to Baltimore County police. Ricky Forehand was pronounced dead at the scene. Police Chief Melissa Hyatt said the injured include two 12-year-old boys, a 14-year-old boy and a 14-year-old girl. All are expected to survive their injuries and one has been released from the hospital. "This level of violence is unacceptable. We had children that were shot last night," Hyatt said. "And an adolescent lost his life for some senseless and unknown reason." (AP)

Asia

N. Korea fires weapons after threatening ‘momentous’ action

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea fired three short-range projectiles off its east coast on Monday, South Korea’s military said, two days after the North threatened to take “momentous” action to protest outside condemnation over its earlier live-fire exercises.

Seoul’s Joint Chiefs of Staff said the three launches were made from an eastern coastal town in the North’s South Hamgyong province. It said the multiple kinds of projectiles flew as far as 200 kilometers (125 miles) at a maximum altitude of 50 kilometers (30 miles).

The statement said South Korea expressed “strong regret” over the launches that it said violate a past inter-Korean agreement aimed at lowering military animosities. South Korea’s national security director, defense minister and spy chief held an emergency video conference and agreed the North Korean action were not helpful to efforts to establish a peace on the Korean Peninsula, according to South Korea’s presidential Blue House.

Japan’s Cabinet Secretariat detected at least one projectile but said it presumably had not reached Japan’s territorial waters or exclusive economic zone. It said North Korea’s repeated launches pose a serious



AP
People watch a TV showing file images of North Korea’s missile launch during a news program at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea, Monday, March 9, 2020.

her statement was followed by Kim sending a letter to South Korean President Moon Jae-in expressing condolences over its coronavirus outbreak.

Some experts say North Korea may intend to catch South Korea off balance before seeking help in reviving its dilapidated economy, since the U.S. has said sanctions on North Korea will stay in place unless it takes significant steps toward denuclearization.

“The coronavirus is likely exceeding North Korea’s public health capacity, so Kim Jong-un is playing a two-level game. At the domestic level, his regime claims to protect the people with drastic quarantine measures and military exercises against external threats,” said Leif-Eric Easley, associate professor at Seoul’s Ewha Womans University. “Pyongyang may be seeking international assistance, but remains obsessed with not appearing in an inferior position to Seoul.”

Nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington remain stalled since the second summit between Kim and President Donald Trump in Hanoi, Vietnam, in early 2019 ended without any agreement.

Subsequent talks between the two countries failed to produce much progress amid disputes over how much sanctions relief should be given in return for a limited step to move away from nuclear weapons by North Korea.

threat to international security.

In the past 10 days, North Korea has said leader Kim Jong Un supervised two rounds of live-fire artillery exercises in its first weapons tests since late November. Kim had entered the new year with a vow to bolster his nuclear deterrent and not to be bound by a major weapons

test moratorium amid a deadlock in a U.S.-led diplomacy aimed at convincing Kim to abandon his nuclear program in return for economic and political benefits.

South Korea and some European countries protested against the second North Korea drills on March 1, which they believe involved

ballistic missile launches in a violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions.

North Korea insists it has the right to conduct military drills in the face of U.S. and South Korean forces on its doorstep.

The U.N. Security Council didn’t issue any statement after discussing North Korea’s March 1 drills, but five European members condemned what they called “provocative actions.”

Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany and the United Kingdom said afterward that the tests undermine regional and international peace, security and stability and violate unanimous Security Council resolutions.

The North’s Foreign Ministry on Saturday accused the five European countries of “repeating an absurd argument of condemnation and violation resolutions of the U.N. whenever we conducted military drills.”

“The illogical thinking and sophism of these countries are just gradually bearing a close resemblance to the U.S. which is hostile to us,” a ministry statement said. “The reckless behavior of these countries instigated by the U.S. will become a fuse that will trigger our yet another momentous reaction.”

Last week, Kim Jong Un’s younger sister leveled diatribes and crude insults against South Korea for criticizing its earlier live-fire exercises, but

Afghan peace pact in chaos as presidential rivals squabble

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Squabbling Afghan presidential rivals threatened to both declare themselves president in dueling inauguration ceremonies Monday, throwing plans for negotiations with the Taliban into chaos.

Those talks among Afghans on both sides of the conflict were supposed to be the next crucial step in a U.S.-Taliban peace deal, signed less than two weeks ago. But the dispute between the top two candidates in last year’s presidential election over who actually won means the Afghan government side appears unable to present a united front.

When Washington and the Taliban insurgents signed the deal, the promise was that Afghans would sit down and negotiate a road map for their country’s future. They are looking to hammer out such thorny issues as women’s rights, free speech and the fate of tens of thousands of armed men on both sides of the 18-year war.

Those negotiations were set to be held Tuesday in Oslo.

The U.S. has said its troop withdrawal from Afghanistan will be linked to the Taliban keeping their counter-terrorism

promises, but not to the success of talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government.

Afghanistan’s election commission has declared incumbent President Ashraf Ghani as the winner of September’s vote. His former partner in a unity government, chief executive Abdullah Abdullah, as well as the election complaints commission say the results are fraught with irregularities. As a result, both Ghani and Abdullah have declared themselves winners.

The two candidates are also backed by warlords who have a stake in who becomes president, complicating negotiations to break the stalemate being conducted by Washington’s peace envoy, Zalmay Khalilzad.

The rival presidential candidates called journalists to their respective inaugurations early Monday, only to delay them for a few hours while more talks were being held.

A senior member of Abdullah’s team, Basir Salangi, told local Afghan channel Tolo TV that the U.S. peace envoy has asked both sides to delay their inaugurations for three days to sort out the stalemate.

Abdullah reportedly said he was ready, but would go ahead with his ceremony Monday if Ghani refused to postpone.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahed, in response to questions from The Associated Press, said late Sunday that the Taliban were still committed to the deal, but said the dueling presidential inaugurations “are not good for the Afghan nation.”

As well as competing candidates, Khalilzad still has to get some agreement on a prisoner release, which was supposed to be settled before the intra-Afghan negotiations could begin. The peace deal signed by the U.S. and Taliban said 5,000 Taliban prisoners and up to 1,000 captives from the government side would be freed as a goodwill gesture ahead of the intra-Afghan negotiations.

Ghani had previously said he won’t release the Taliban prisoners, even as U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called on all sides to stop posturing and free their prisoners, some of whom have already served their sentences. Pompeo called on all sides get on with talks about the country’s future.

10 dead, 23 missing as hotel in China virus fight collapses

BEIJING (AP)—At least 10 people were killed in the collapse of Chinese hotel that was being used to isolate people who had arrived from other parts of China hit hard by the coronavirus outbreak, authorities said Sunday.

The sudden collapse of the building in the southeastern city of Quanzhou on Saturday evening trapped 71 people, China’s Ministry of Emergency Management said.

The ministry said that 38 had been rescued and 23 were still missing. Most of the rescued were taken to hospitals for treatment, some with serious injuries.

The cause of the collapse was under investigation, and the owner of the building was put under police control, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

Two retail spaces on the first floor of the seven-story building were undergoing remodeling, and a pillar reportedly deformed a few minutes before the collapse, Xinhua said, quoting a housing and development official.

Built in 2013, the building was later converted to a 66-room hotel that opened in June 2018, Quanzhou authorities said. The coastal city is in Fujian province, across the Taiwan Strait from the island of Taiwan.

The city said that 58 people from epidemic-hit areas were staying at the Xinjia Hotel for medical observation. All had tested negative for the virus. Most Chinese cities are isolating people coming from Hubei province, where the disease is most widespread, for 14 days.

Hotel workers and employees of an auto shop in the building were also inside at the time of the collapse.

More than 1,000 firefighters and seven rescue dogs were dispatched to the site, according to the Ministry of Emergency Management. News photos showed rescue workers with lights bringing out people, some bloodied by the collapse. Rubble could be seen on cars in front of the building.

China, where the new virus first emerged in December, has confirmed more than 80,000 cases, about 75 percent of the global total. More than 3,000 people have died in China. Most of the cases have been in Wuhan, an inland city in Hubei province about 670 kilometers (475 miles) northwest of Quanzhou.

World

Women fill streets of world's cities with call for justice

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Women filled the streets of the world's largest cities Sunday to protest gender violence and inequality on International Women's Day, with the mothers of murdered girls leading a march in Mexico City and participants in Paris inveighing against the "virus of the patriarchy."

While many protests were peaceful celebrations others were marred by tension, with security forces arresting demonstrators at a rally in Kyrgyzstan and police reportedly using tear gas to break up a demonstration by thousands of women in Turkey.

"In many different ways or forms, women are being exploited and taken advantage of," Arlene Brosas, the representative of a Filipino advocacy group said during a rally that drew hundreds to the area near the Philippine presidential palace. Protesters called for higher pay and job security, and demanded that President Rodrigo Duterte respect women's rights.

Turkish riot police fired tear gas to disperse thousands of demonstrators who, in defiance of a government ban, tried to march along Istanbul's main pedestrian street to mark International Women's Day, media reports said.

Turkish authorities declared Istiklal street, near Istanbul's main Taksim square, off-limits, and said the planned march down the avenue was



Pakistani activists take part in an International Women's Day rally in Lahore, Pakistan, Sunday, March 8, 2020. Pakistanis held rallies across the country.

unauthorized. Thousands of demonstrators, most of them women, gathered near Istiklal regardless and tried to break through police barricades to reach it, according to the opposition Cumhuriyet newspaper and other media.

The independent T24 news website said police also fired blanks to disperse the crowd.

In Pakistan, however, women managed to rally in cities across the country, despite

petitions filed in court seeking to stop them. The opposition was stirred in part by controversy over a slogan used in last year's march: "My Body, My Choice."

Some conservative groups had threatened to stop this year's marches by force. But Pakistani officials pledged to protect the marchers. The rallies are notable in a conservative country where women often do not feel safe in public

places because of open harassment. The main Islamic political party, Jamaat-e-Islami, organized its own rallies to counter the march.

Tens of thousands of women filled the streets of Mexico's capital to protest rampant femicides and impunity for the killers. The country has recently seen a series of rowdy protests by women who have vandalized monuments and

metro stations to express their anger in one of the world's most dangerous countries to be a woman.

On average, more than 10 women are slain each day in Mexico, often by their male partners.

The mothers of slain women and girls led Sunday's march, with people cheering them on, chanting: "You're not alone!" They were followed by home-

makers, students and mothers with small children wearing purple shirts, bandannas and hats.

"I don't want to be the next one, and I don't want my mother to be the next one," said Ana Paula Santos, a 21-year-old public university student.

María de la Luz Estrada, coordinator of the National Citizen's Observatory on Femicide, said more Mexican women have taken to the streets in recent years because the assaults and killings are "increasingly more alarming."

Earlier, activists had painted the names of many of the thousands of women killed each year in Mexico on the ground of the capital's iconic Zocalo plaza.

One of the largest demonstrations occurred in Chile, where thousands flooded the streets of the capital with dancing, music and angry demands for gender equality and an end to violence against women.

"They kill us, they rape us and nobody does anything," some chanted.

National police estimated 125,000 took part in the capital and nearly 35,000 in other cities, but organizers said the crowds were far larger. Scattered clashes broke out at points when demonstrators threw rocks at police, who responded with water cannon.

Pilgrims turn to prayer, kinship during coronavirus scare

JERUSALEM (AP)—A group of Christian pilgrims from Alabama is turning to prayer and positive thinking as they cope with an open-ended coronavirus quarantine, confined to their West Bank hotel rooms while they wait for clearance to return to the United States.

Chris Bell, the lead pastor at the 3Circle Church in Fairhope, Ala., said his 13-member group arrived last week for what was supposed to be a dream-of-a-lifetime trip to the Holy Land. But after two days of touring Jerusalem and Bethlehem, they were notified that they might have been exposed to the virus after a group of Greek tourists staying in the same hotel had tested positive. They have been instructed by local authorities to remain in their hotel indefinitely.

"We're really sad that things turned out the way they did," Bell said. "It's not a great situation, but we're trying to

make the best of it."

He said the group is made up of church staff and spouses, and for almost everyone, it was their first time in the Holy Land. He said this familiarity and shared faith, along with generosity from the hotel and the local community, has helped them get through the ordeal.

He said the group is confined to one floor of the hotel. Each morning, he said people put on gloves and masks and meet in the hallway to pray together. They also have reading materials and wi-fi, allowing them to read the news, stream movies and remain in contact with the outside world.

"We love each other. Most of us have our spouses with us as well. So all of that human interaction, even though it's through gloves, masks and at a distance really helps us get through every day," he said.

Bell said the hotel staff has treated his group with great hospitality, disinfecting rooms

and delivering food in plastic bags. He said the local community has sent shipments of everything, from shawarma to bread and chips, and from Popeye's Chicken to medications. His group also remains in contact with Palestinian and Israeli authorities, as well as U.S. consular officials at the American Embassy in Jerusalem.

Late on Sunday, the group got some good news. Palestinian government spokesman Ibrahim Melhin announced that test results had come back and determined no one was infected.

"There is no need for them to stay in quarantine," he said, adding that he expected them to leave by Monday morning. Bell did not return a message seeking comment, while the U.S. Embassy declined comment, citing privacy concerns.

But earlier, Bell said everyone remained hopeful they would be allowed to go home soon.

WORLD BRIEFS

At least 26 Iraqis among killed in Syria road accident

BAGHDAD (AP)—At least 26 Iraqis were among those killed in a Syrian highway accident last week, in which a fuel truck collided with passenger buses and other cars, Iraqi's foreign ministry spokesman said Sunday. Ahmad al-Sahhaf said at least 16 Iraqis were also injured in what he described as a "regretful" traffic accident, and not a militant attack. He said the bodies will be transported to Iraq. Syrian state media quoted local officials saying at least 32 were killed in the accident and 77 were injured. Iraqi politicians called for an investigation, saying the passengers were Shiite pilgrims on their way to visit shrines in Damascus, which has been largely protected from the ongoing war. But such convoys have previously come under attack from armed groups.

6 killed in Alpine avalanches in Austria

BERLIN (AP)—Six people were killed in two separate avalanches in the Austrian Alps on Sunday, Austrian authorities said. Five snowshowers who were hiking in central Austria were hit by one avalanche at about 9:30 a.m., Austria's APA news agency reported. Several people witnessed the avalanche and immediately informed emergency services, but the hikers, believed to be from the Czech Republic, were

already dead by the time rescuers got to them. There had been high winds and heavy snowfall in the area over the past few days, leading to the avalanche. And in southwestern Austria, a police officer who was undergoing Alpine training was killed when he was hit by a separate avalanche. He was hit by a large piece of frozen snow and died at the scene from his injuries, state authorities told APA.

North Macedonia police discover 56 migrants in truck

SKOPJE, North Macedonia (AP)—Police in North Macedonia discovered 56 migrants during a routine search of a truck and arrested the driver on suspicion of belonging to a trafficking ring that brought them in from Greece, authorities said Sunday. The incident took place late Saturday in the town of Gevgelija, near the border with Greece, about 160 kilometers (100 miles) south of the capital, Skopje, late Saturday. The truck driver was identified as a 46-year-old Macedonian national. The migrants, 54 Pakistanis and two Afghans, are expected to be transferred to a detention center in Gevgelija pending deportation back to Greece. North Macedonia has increased patrols on the border with Greece, after Turkey opened its border last week to outgoing migrants. Caretaker Prime Minister Oliver Spasovski said Sunday that North Macedonia will resist any attempts by migrants to cross the border.

Focus

The photo of his father was barely recognizable. The old man looked unusually pale and tired, and his customary beard was shaved off. The son who received the photo over WhatsApp was immediately suspicious.

He hadn't heard from his family in western China for two years while he studied at a U.S. university.

His family are Uighurs, a predominantly Muslim ethnic group that has become the target of a massive crackdown in China. Since 2017, more than 1 million people have been confined to internment camps and many more are monitored in their own homes.

Why would he get this message now? And why would it come over WhatsApp? The messaging platform is censored for ordinary people in China, but often is used by authorities.

No words accompanied the photo, but he interpreted it as a kind of warning.

"I feel like I'm being watched even in the United States," he said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he fears reprisals from the Chinese government. "They have all of our information. They know where we live."

Such fear of surveillance has become a fact of life for thousands of Uighurs living outside China and struggling to rebuild lives abroad, while family and friends go missing in China's western Xinjiang region. Within China, the State Department says, many Uighurs have been subjected to torture and other abuse.

Even Uighurs who now live in the relative safety of the United States, where their situation has sparked bipartisan concern in Congress, say they still fear being monitored and worry that speaking freely may spur reprisals against family members in Xinjiang.

"I hear these stories all the time," said Kuzzat Altay, president of the Uighur American Association whose own father renounced him in a video released by Chinese authorities on social media. "People come to me crying."

Altay, who came to the U.S. as a refugee and has become a citizen, started a Uighur entrepreneurship network outside Washington. But most of the 25 members dropped out at the urging of family members in Xinjiang who had been visited by local authorities.

Altay said he thinks Chinese authorities worried that his entrepreneurship group would have discussed the crackdown back home.

The Chinese Embassy in

Washington did not respond to a request for comment.

Ferkat Jawdat is a naturalized American citizen who came to the U.S. nine years ago and works as a software engineer in Virginia. His mother was taken into the Xinjiang internment camps in 2018.

Last May, when she was briefly released, she called and told him not to speak out about Uighur issues. He later learned from relatives that she had contacted him at police

ated Press, most of whom did not want their names used, described various forms of intimidation.

They described calls from Chinese government officials instructing them to "check in" at Chinese consulates. Some were told their Chinese passports would not be renewed and were offered one-way travel documents back to China. Several said relatives back home were visited by local police looking for information

wanted from me."

These accounts of harassment match reports compiled by activists and human rights groups, including Amnesty International, which last month documented widespread fear of surveillance and retribution among 400 Uighurs living in 22 countries.

The Uighur global diaspora is estimated to be between 1 million and 1.6 million people.

There are several thousand Uighurs in the United States,

The wait for asylum, however, can take years and the anxiety can be grueling.

"Even if you're free in the U.S., you can't leave the U.S. while your asylum application is pending," said James Millward, a professor of history who researches Xinjiang at Georgetown University. "If you have relatives in Europe or Canada, you can't go see them. You can't travel there for work. And you may have to wait for years."

recent years, surveillance cameras and police checkpoints have become ubiquitous.

The government began to build internment camps in 2017 as a means of intimidation and social control. Former camp detainees have previously told the AP that after being confined in the camps, they were forced to renounce their faith and swear fealty to China's ruling Communist Party.

Uighurs face limits on the use of their language in schools, their ability to check into hotels and restrictions on cultural practices such as wearing beards and fasting during religious holidays.

The government's goal is to "eradicate Uighur culture," said Dolkun Isa, president of the World Uighur Congress.

He added that social controls have grown more stringent since the inception of Chinese leader Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative—an overseas infrastructure funding policy—has enhanced the strategic importance of Xinjiang's location bordering Central Asia.

China's foreign ministry regularly bristles at international criticism of policies in Xinjiang, which it views as an internal matter. It has said that measures in Xinjiang are intended to curb religious extremism and that the detention camps are "vocational centers," where people are held voluntarily. But it has refused to permit independent monitors to visit.

It's not possible to confirm that the intimidating messages received by Uighurs abroad come from Chinese officials. But the Uighurs' accounts of harassment have been consistent enough that both Republicans and Democrats in Congress back legislation that would require the FBI to help protect Uighurs in the United States.

The young man who received the photo of his father and the string of suspicious messages said he called the FBI and that two agents met with him. The agency wouldn't comment on whether it investigated the particular case, but said in a statement, "Without discussing specifics, we take all reports of threats or intimidation seriously."

Meanwhile, the man has continued his studies while he awaits a decision on his asylum application and worries about relatives in China. "They could punish my family, if they haven't already sent them to the camps, because I didn't cooperate."

"Even if you have physical freedom, it's very difficult to escape the reach of the Chinese government," said Mezger, the attorney.



In this Dec. 22, 2019, file photo, a man holds a sign during a rally to show support for Uighurs and their fight for human rights in Hong Kong. People from western China who are targets of a Chinese government crackdown say they have been threatened and harassed in the United States. Those fleeing the crackdown on the predominantly Muslim Uighur ethnic group typically receive U.S. asylum. But Uighurs tell The Associated Press and human rights groups they still afraid amid threats aimed at them and their families back in China. **AP**

Targets of crackdown in China fear government's reach in US

By **BEN FOX** and **CHRISTINA LARSON**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

insistence and was taken back into police custody the very next day.

The Chinese government is broadly suspicious of Uighurs who have spent significant time abroad, said Brian Mezger, an immigration lawyer who specializes in Uighur asylum cases.

"The Chinese government views exposure to foreign influence as basically polluting the Uighurs," said Mezger, whose practice is based in Rockville, Maryland.

A dozen Uighurs in the U.S. interviewed by The Associ-

ated Press, most of whom did not want their names used,

The young man who received the photo of his father in June, two years after family members in Xinjiang warned him to cut off contact, says he doesn't know what authorities wanted from him.

He also received a series of unsettling text messages in the Uighur language, but he responded in Chinese to ask why the sender had contacted him. The person sending the messages said that if he wanted to have a video chat with my father, he could arrange it. "He wouldn't say what he

with the largest concentration living in the Washington D.C. area.

"This is happening to people's neighbors, to fellow Americans—that's what's so scary," said Francisco Bencosme, an Asia-Pacific advocacy manager for Amnesty International.

Uighurs qualify for asylum in the U.S. because today they face almost certain detention if they return to China, said Mezger, who has represented hundreds of people from Xinjiang. He said nearly all of his cases have been successful.

Xinjiang, which means "new frontier" in Chinese, was brought under control of Chinese authorities in Beijing in the 19th century. But the western desert region has longstanding cultural, religious, and linguistic ties to Central Asia and to Turkey.

Uighurs have faced numerous previous persecution and assimilation campaigns by the Chinese government.

An enhanced security state began to take shape in Xinjiang after 2009, when race riots left around 200 people dead in the capital city of Urumqi. In

Overdrive

AUTO REVIEW



2021 Kia Seltos SX Turbo AWD
KIA/TNS

2021 Kia Seltos brings Telluride style to affordable small SUV

By MARK PHELAN
DETROIT FREE PRESS

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—Kia bottles some of the magic from its hit Telluride in a smaller, more affordable package with the 2021 Seltos, a small SUV that delivers plenty of features and value.

Prices for the five-passenger Seltos start under \$22,000 and top out around \$28,000, competitive figures for a good-looking SUV that offers all-wheel drive and safety features.

The Seltos competes with subcompact SUVs like the Ford Ecosport, Honda HR-V, Hyundai Kona, Jeep Renegade and the upcoming Chevrolet Trailblazer.

At 172 inches, the Seltos is longer than all but the Trailblazer, with a roomy interior and good cargo space.

Driving impressions

I spent a day driving a Seltos SX AWD with the optional 175-horsepower 1.6L turbo-charged engine and seven-speed dual-clutch automatic transmission in the Central Texas Hill country. The route included highway, city and suburban driving. We made a brief loop through the meadows of a ranch that raises exotic deer, relying on burros and ostriches to defend the season’s fawns from marauding coyotes.

The animals don’t cotton to coyotes but are docile and shy toward people and Kias. Ostrich behavior ranged from mildly curious to pecking at tasty looking taillights and winding up for a coyote-decapitating kick at a door panel.

No Seltoses were injured in the making of this column. Oscar, the petulant bird, was lured into a pen after a 50-mph run at a Telluride scouting the route.

The all-wheel-drive system in the vehicle I drove isn’t intended for serious off-roading, but a locking center differential can move up to 50% of torque to the rear wheels for acceleration and traction in mild conditions. Despite those mild limited expectations, Seltoses for the U.S. get a mildly redesigned nose that creates a 28-degree angle of approach and—more to the point—an appearance suggesting rugged capability.

The Seltos is roomy and comfortable. Longer than most of its competitors, it also has a useful cargo compartment behind the rear seat.

At just 63.6 inches tall, the Seltos is easy to enter and exit. A low step-in height, long hood and roof create a relatively car-like profile

It’s the first Kia with Bose audio. An 8-inch touch screen is standard, while the SX has a 10.25-inch screen.

The seats are comfortable, controls easy to use. Upper S and SX models get a wireless charger while all models have voice recognition, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

The Seltos I drove was loaded with safety and convenience features. It cost

NUTS & BOLTS

2021 Kia Seltos at a glance
Small five-seat SUV

- **Prices:** Starting at \$21,990
- **Drivetrain:** Front- or all-wheel drive
- **Competitors:** Chevrolet Trailblazer, Ford Ecosport, Honda HR-V, Jeep Renegade
- **Powertrains:** 2.0L 145-hp four-cylinder engine with continuously variable automatic transmission or 195-hp 1.6L turbo with seven-speed dual-clutch automatic transmission
- **Wheelbase:** 103.5 inches
- **Length:** 172 inches
- **Width:** 70.9 inches
- **Height:** 63.6 inches
- **Built:** Gwangju, Korea

IN CELEBRATION OF HER NEW LIFE

Gregoria Iguel Lieta Agulto

LOVINGLY KNOWN AS “MOM KORANG”
BORN TO LIFE: MAY 23, 1950
CALLED TO ETERNAL LIFE: MARCH 03, 2020

In her Eternal Life, she now joins:

Parents:

Gregorio Liteigiyong Lieta
Magdalena Iguel Ilisari & Francisco Ilisar

Parents-in-Law:

Guillermo Concepcion Agulto
Martha Palacios Agulto

Son:

Jack Lieta Agulto

Her spirits and memories will forever live in the hearts of:

Husband:

Francisco Palacios Agulto

Children (Grandchildren):

Roman P. & Ellen T. Agulto (Herminia, Carmelyn, Raena lynn, Eleor, Francin, Kimberly, Roman Jr., Jonathan)
Kent & Karen A. Kalen (Lucio Jude, Kent Jr., Jay Franklin, Katie Lynn, Kalie Ann, Dionne)
Kelvin L. Kalen (Jack, Karl)
Martha A. & Kimo Rogopes (Keona Macaria, Francisco, Mark Kenneth, Mia Kady, Kimo Jr.,)

Siblings:

†Manases/†Aurelia Iguel & Family
†Faustina L./†Santiago Kalen & Family
†Ramon I./†Basilisa Lieta & Family
†Vicente I./†Maria T. Lieta & Family
†Herman I. Lieta
†Daniel I./Lucy O. Lieta & Family

In-laws:

†Ignacio P./†Prudenciana S. Agulto & Family
†Ramon P. Agulto
†Jose P./Carmen Agulto & Family
†Margaret A. Retan & Family
†Daniel P. Agulto & Family
†Maria A./+Steve Stoll & Family
†Dolores P. Agulto/Johnny Cruz & Family
Merced A./Augustin Camacho & Family
†Guillermo P. Agulto & Family
†Jesus P./Rita R. Agulto & Family
Ana A./Rick Taunton & Family

Our beloved Mom Korang is additionally survived by numerous aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, godchildren, relatives, and friends.

Funeral services will be held on Wednesday, March 11, 2020. Her remains will be escorted from the CHCC Chapel to Santa Remedios Church at 7:00am. Responso service will take place upon arrival of her remains followed by recitation of the Holy Rosary and public visitation. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:00am followed by interment service at the Tanapag Cemetery.

Please Join Us in Prayers

Dangkulo na Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Olomway, and Thank you

from the family

\$28,435. All prices exclude destination charges.

How much?

Flush with success from the acclaimed six- or seven-seat Telluride, Kia didn’t even try to give the Seltos the lowest price in its class. The brand emphasized features, offering just a single front-wheel-drive model, and surprisingly not using that inevitably slow-selling configuration to create an advertising-friendly, minimally equipped base model.

The starting price for both front- and all-wheel-drive Seltoses is \$21,990. That’s above the base price for most competitors, and the FWD model has more standard equipment than AWD, unlike the stripped versions most companies build to attract customers who will most likely be talked into a pricier model.

Kia still expects most Seltos sales to be mid-level AWD models with prices in the \$23,000-\$26,000 range.

The base engine is a 2.0L four-cylinder that generates 146 hp and 132 pound-feet of torque. It’s linked to a continuously variable automatic transmission and available on FWD and AWD models. An optional 1.6L turbo engine that produces 176-hp and 195 pound-feet of torque is available only on upper-level AWD S and SX models. It’s paired with a smooth seven-speed dual-clutch automatic.

Available features

- Automatic high beams
- Forward collision alert and automatic braking
- Rear cross-traffic alert and automatic braking
- Blind spot alert and assist
- Lane-keeping and following assist
- Lane departure alert
- Driver attention warning
- 8- or 10.25-inch touch screen
- Heated front seats
- Reclining rear seats
- 18-inch alloy wheels
- LED headlights, tail lights, running lights and indicators
- Bose audio
- Adaptive cruise control
- Push button start
- Remote start
- Two-tone paint

Life & Style

Royal farewell: Harry, Meghan on final duty before new life

LONDON (AP)—It's definitely a farewell. But will it be fond?

Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, will fulfill their final royal commitment when they appear Monday at the annual Commonwealth Service at Westminster Abbey in London. It's the last time they will be seen at work with the entire royal Windsor clan before they fly off into self-imposed exile in North America.

The service marks the end of a two-month drama that began when the couple announced plans to walk away from their roles as senior members of Britain's royal family and into a world where they will have to earn a living, pay their own way and even open some doors for themselves.

It's uncharted territory for the House of Windsor, even as the family seeks to downsize.

"I think this is a blow because I don't think (the Windsors) would have envisaged that the slimmed-down monarchy would have actually meant that there was no role for Meghan and Harry," said Pauline Maclaran, co-author of "Royal Fever: The British Monarchy in Consumer Culture." "I mean, they really brought a new dimension to the royal family brand."

It wasn't supposed to happen this way.

Less than two years ago, Harry and Meghan were seen as a golden couple that would help extend the royal family's appeal to a new generation. Their wedding on May 19, 2018, united a grandson of 93-year-old Queen Elizabeth II with the former Meghan



In this Thursday, Nov. 7, 2019 file photo, Britain's Prince Harry and Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex attend the 91st Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey in London.

Markle, a bi-racial American actress who had starred for seven years on the U.S. television series "Suits." George Clooney, Serena Williams and Elton John attended their wedding at Windsor Castle, which ended with the royal couple kissing for their flag-waving fans and riding through the streets in a horse-drawn carriage.

But the horses were barely back at the stable before pressures intensified on the couple, who became the Duke and Duchess of Sussex on their wedding day.

Even before the ceremony,

Britain's tabloid newspapers featured stories about a rift between Meghan and her father. When Meghan became pregnant, some commentators criticized her for jetting off to New York for a baby shower, a strange American tradition to many in Britain. Others lampooned Meghan's politically correct pronouncements on the environment and women's rights.

Meghan's supporters saw racism at work. Harry publicly defended his wife and directed his anger at the intrusive media he has resented all his life

because of the paparazzi's role in chasing his mother, Princess Diana, on the night in 1997 when she died in a Paris car accident.

The prince himself was stung by media reports of a split between him and his older brother, Prince William. The notion that the brothers and their glamorous wives would be a royal "Fab Four" for the 21st century began to fade.

"For me, and for my wife, of course there's a lot of stuff that hurts, especially when the majority of it is untrue," Harry, 35, told ITV News last fall. "I

will not be bullied into playing a game that killed my mum."

Then in January, the couple sparked a royal crisis when they revealed that they intended to step back from their duties as senior members of the royal family. The move came after holiday pictures were released of the queen along with son Prince Charles, grandson Prince William and great-grandson Prince George. The future was pictured and Harry wasn't part of it.

In a personal statement, Harry and Meghan revealed that they intended to become

"financially independent" and "balance" their time between the U.K. and North America, while continuing to honor and serve the queen. They wanted, in essence, to be part-time royals.

Hours later, Buckingham Palace issued a statement hinting that this part-time notion had caught some in the royal household by surprise. Discussions with the Duke and Duchess, it said, were "at an early stage."

With his ginger hair, close-cropped beard and easy manner, Harry had become one of the royal family's most popular members after shedding the hard-partying image of his youth. The youngest son of Charles and the late Princess Diana, Harry is sixth in line to the throne, after his father, William and William's three children. More importantly, he and William were seen as a new generation who would modernize the royals.

But there's no precedent for a part-time role in the House of Windsor's family firm. After all, Edward VIII was largely shunned by the royal family after he abdicated the throne to marry American divorcee Wallis Simpson in 1936.

Anguish followed the dueling announcements.

Aggrieved taxpayers insisted that Harry and Meghan repay the 2.4 million pounds (\$3.1 million) of public money spent to renovate the house in Windsor where they had planned to live. Their social media feeds, normally full of heart-shaped emoticons, were flooded with ill-tempered commentary about their decision to abandon Britain.

Clash over money threatens to undermine reconciliation

DEAR ABBY: My wife, "Cynthia," and I are a middle-aged couple who have been married four years. Shortly after our wedding, she suffered a stroke during a heart transplant. After she returned home from the hospital, a "friend" told her I was having an affair (I wasn't). Without telling me why, Cynthia threw me out of the house and returned to a distant state to be near her family. She had most of her belongings shipped there.

After I presented proof of my innocence a year later, we reconciled. The first couple of years of marriage were chaotic, and I know I wasn't perfect. But I did the best I could and stood by her throughout the medical ordeal.

Now, Cynthia is saying I should have to pay to have her items shipped back simply because I'm "the man." Abby, we have roughly the same income due to pensions. We have always kept our finances separate. I think she should pay to have her own items returned because she is the one who shipped them over there based on a lie. The money itself isn't the issue; it's the principle. I feel like this is a slap in the face. What do you think?

MR. NICE GUY

DEAR MR. NICE GUY: You shouldn't have to pay for anything "because you're the man." You didn't cheat, and

you aren't responsible for the fact that Cynthia overreacted and ran away the way she did.

You say that until now you have kept your finances separate because you each have your own incomes. My advice is to refuse to be manipulated. Your wife should pay to have her belongings returned, just as she paid to have them sent away without verifying whether the story was true.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: When I was a child, my dad told me, "If it weren't for you kids, there are so many things your mother and I could have." What I remember most was the intensity in his voice.

When I was old enough to work, I had a job after school so I could pay for my own clothes although my family wasn't poor. My father repeatedly let me know I was "lucky" I didn't get taken out of school to help support the family. When I graduated from high school at 17, I immediately went to work, and I paid for my board.

I married at 18 to get out of the house and paid for my own wedding. It never even occurred to me to ask for help. When I ended up divorced, I worked my way through college. When I graduated, my mother had to make my father go to my graduation because he didn't want to.

I have never been able to shake the feeling that I don't have a

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



right to anything, and I'm not good enough. My other siblings are a mess, too. How do I shake this feeling of not being worthy?

WORTHLESS IN FLORIDA

DEAR WORTHLESS: Children develop their feelings of self-worth from their parents. It appears at least one of yours was missing in action from the time you were little.

I don't have a magic wand, and I can't make the negative message your father implanted in your head disappear. On the upside, your upbringing made you independent, if only out of necessity. It may take help from a licensed mental health professional to make the scars from the way your father raised you fade.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Bakery buys

5 Pub pint

8 Synthesizer pioneer

12 Madonna's "La — Bonita"

13 Refusals

14 Unsightly

15 "A Passage to India" actor Alec

17 Bridge coup

18 Part of DJIA

19 Barkin and De-Generes

21 Mouselike mammal

24 — B'rith

25 Not single-sex

26 Salad ingredient

30 Lawyers' org.

31 Presaged

32 Numbered rd.

33 Assails persistently

35 Movie

DOWN

36 Tennis star

37 Wide

38 Bleak

41 Motorist's org.

42 Saudi native

43 Composition writer

48 BLT spread

49 Perch

50 Algerian seaport

51 Old U.S. gas brand

52 Resort

53 On deck

1 Pot-bellied pet

11 Workout venues

16 At once

20 Praise

21 Wound cover

22 Vagrant

23 500 sheets

24 Pal

26 Battery-powered, say

27 Vivacity, in music

28 Sicilian spouter

29 Clarinet insert

31 Eric of "Munich"

34 Panda's diet

35 Kid's coloring stick

37 Cote cry

38 Title for Judi Dench

39 401(k) relatives

40 Declares

41 Hammett pooch

44 Use a straw

45 Fury

46 Kenny G's instrument

47 Stick with a kick

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 3-10

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Olivia Wilde, 36; Carrie Underwood, 37; Jon Hamm, 49; Sharon Stone, 62.

Happy Birthday: Put more oomph into whatever you decide to do this year, and you'll attract positive attention. Reaching out to help others will put you in a power position that will turn you into the go-to person. The more control you have, the easier it will be to get things done and to reach your goal. Partnerships will change your life and encourage greater intimacy. Your numbers are 4, 15, 19, 27, 32, 35, 43.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't overreact, or you will end up in a compromising position. Use what unfolds to your advantage. Keep your personal life and endeavors secret for the time being. Be observant and ready to make your move. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Someone from your past will offer you a noteworthy prospect. A favor you provided will lead to rewards. Make a budget-friendly personal adjustment, and you will free up time and money and ease stress. A partnership looks promising. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Speak up. Don't give anyone a chance to talk you into something you don't want to do. Use your intelligence to outsmart anyone who tampers with your plans. Learn from the experience, and don't promise or take on the impossible. *****

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Make every move count. Head in a direction that fulfills your needs. Don't give in to someone using emotional tactics to confuse you. Use your imagination to solve any dilemma you

face. Stop trying to please everyone else, and do what's best for you. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): A trip will be useful for you. Whether it's a physical, emotional or mental journey, the outcome should grant you clarity and understanding of what's possible. Make time for someone special, and it will enhance your relationship. *****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Check out what friends, peers and relatives choose to do with their time. The conversations you have will lead to professional and personal possibilities. Refrain from making a donation that isn't budget-friendly. Invest in your life, not someone else's. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Be upfront about your intentions. Don't compensate for a shortcoming you think you have by offering a false impression. Truth matters and will instill trust and respect in those you deal with today. You'll discover a skill you didn't know you have. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Stick to your budget. Don't take on someone's responsibility or debt. A domestic change will help you overcome the dilemma you face. A personal change will help you recognize what it is you want out of life. Romance is favored. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Pay attention. Someone will play games with you, using unfair tactics that will leave you questioning your feelings as well as your plans. Keep your life and your ideas simple, moderate and within your means. Think before you act. *****

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Money and emotions won't mix well today. Keep your wallet, possessions and passwords tucked away in a safe place. Make a personal change that will lift your spirits. Put your needs first, and do what's best for you. **

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Collect or pay off a debt. Handle a pending settlement with direct communication. Someone will offer you sound advice regarding a relationship that is going through uncertain times. Use your voice to clear the air. *****

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Share your thoughts, and you'll interest people who have something to contribute to your plans. Participate in an event or activity that gives you the chance to show off your skills. A personal change will lead to positive results. ***

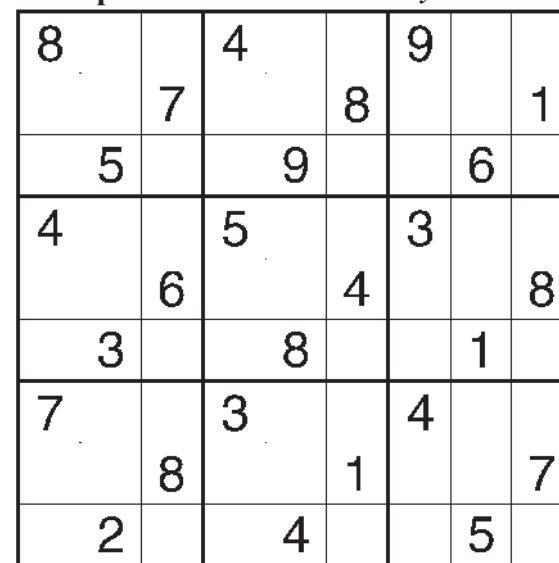
Birthday Baby: You are informative, friendly and willful. You are creative and strategic.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

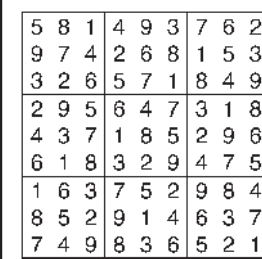


Difficulty Level ★★

3/10

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer



Not Truly Level A

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

WINTER IS WINDING DOWN

Solution: 6 letters

B F P E N G U I N E Z O R F H
S O R O W L S C S D F R A C S
L E B O O O H I L C I S U I T
L Y V S S I O C U C I G L O O
A D A O L T S L S L O B I R R
B U N D L E B E H D O C E R M
W V R C I G I I R O K T E A F
O E C V H L B G T E A V R E H
N T O U C E O S T E I C E M A
S M P A R K A H W H H C T I R
T E E N R L N S S B C O A T S
O L A I S E I R R U L F E L H
V T N P B L A N K E T E H Y G
E K S P A C R E G U L W A R M
S C R Y S T A L S S E T A K S

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3/10

Blanket, Bleak, Bobsleigh, Boots, Bundle, Caps, Children, Chills, Coats, Cold, Cool, Crystals, Curling, Duvet, Flurries, Frigid, Frostbite, Frozen, Glacier, Gloves, Harsh, Heater, Hibernation, Holiday, Icicle, Igloo, Luge, March, Melt, Movies, Nippy, Owls, Parka, Penguin, Rain, Rinks, Scarf, Shiver, Skates, Slush, Snowball, Storm, Stove, Suit, Sweater, Time, Warm, Wool

Yesterday's Answer: **Praying**
To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 40, 42, and 44 through 58 order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

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Lakers end Clippers' 6-game winning streak



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Anthony Davis scored 30 points, LeBron James added 28 and the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Clippers 112-103 on Sunday, snapping their Staples Center co-tenant's six-game winning streak.

Avery Bradley added 24 points to help the Lakers won their fourth in a row and 11th in 12 games. They pulled away in the second half after the Clippers' smothering defense helped them lead most of the first two quarters.

The Lakers recently clinched a playoff berth for the first time since 2013, and it's possible they could meet the Clippers in the postseason. The crowd made it feel like a playoff atmosphere, with a strong contingent of raucous Lakers fans on hand for what was a Clippers' home game. They chanted "MVP! MVP!" when James completed a 3-point play that tied the Lakers' largest lead of 12 points with 40 seconds to play.

Paul George scored 31 points, Kawhi Leonard added 27 and Montrezl Harrell had 20 for the Clippers. They lost to the Lakers for the first time in three games this season.

Suns 140, Bucks 131

In Phoenix, Devin Booker scored 20 of his 36 points in the Suns' 47-point first quarter to help the team beat Milwaukee.

The Bucks played without MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo because of a minor knee sprain. Injured Friday night in a loss at the Los Angeles Lakers, he'll also sit out Monday night at Denver.

Booker was 7 of 8 from the field in the first quarter, going 4-for-4 on 3-pointers. He finished 13 of 17 from the field, 4 of 6 on 3s, made 6 of 7 free throws and had eight assists.

Ricky Rubio had a triple-double for the Suns with 25 points, 13 assists and 13 rebounds. Aron Baynes added 24

points, and Mikal Bridges had 21. Khris Middleton scored 39 points for Milwaukee.

Thunder 105, Celtics 104

In Boston, Dennis Schroder stripped the ball from Kemba Walker and scored on a layup with 8.5 seconds to help Oklahoma City rally past the Celtics.

Chris Paul led the Thunder with 28 points and seven assists, and Schroder added 27 points and six assists. Oklahoma City overcame an 18-point first-half deficit to win its third straight.

Gordon Hayward led the Celtics with 24 points.

Magic 126, Rockets 106

In Houston, D.J. Augustin scored 24 points, Aaron Gordon added 19 and Orlando handed the slumping Rockets their fourth straight loss.

Nikola Vucevic added 16 points and 16 rebounds for Orlando.

Russell Westbrook led Houston with 24 points to give him at least 20 in a career-long 33 straight games, but he also topped the Rockets with eight turnovers. James Harden scored 23 points, but made just 6 of 19 shots.

Raptors 118, Kings 113

In Sacramento, Pascal Siakam scored 11 of his 23 points in the final 2+ minutes, Toronto got a big fourth quarter from Kyle Lowry and the Raptors held on to beat the Kings.

Lowry scored 13 of his 30 points in the final quarter after picking up his fifth foul early in the period. Siakam took over the scoring load late and helped the Raptors to their third straight win since a three-game skid.

Norman Powell had 31 points, and Serge Ibaka added 15 points and 10 rebounds.

De'Aaron Fox scored 28 points for the Kings.

Pelicans 120, Timberwolves 107

In Minneapolis, Jrue Holiday



just missed his second triple-double against Minnesota in less than a week, putting up a season-high 37 points and adding nine rebounds and eight assists for New Orleans.

Zion Williamson scored 23 points on 9-for-15 shooting, Lonzo Ball had 18 points and eight assists, and Brandon Ingram pitched in 15 points and 12 rebounds to help the Pelicans start a four-game trip with the victory.

Malik Beasley had 21

points and nine rebounds for Minnesota.

Pacers 112, Mavericks 109

In Dallas, Domantas Sabonis had 20 points and 17 rebounds, and Victor Oladipo scored the final six points to help Indiana beat the Mavericks.

Despite leading for most of the game, the Pacers were down 109-104 with 3:14 to play—but held the Mavericks scoreless the rest of the way.

Luka Dončić scored 36 points for Dallas. Tim Hardaway Jr. had 20 of his 30 points in the second half.

Nets 110, Bulls 107

In New York, Spencer Dinwiddie scored 24 points, Caris LeVert and Joe Harris each added 23 and Brooklyn beat Chicago, a day after the Nets parted ways with coach Kenny Atkinson.

Interim head coach Jacque Vaughn directed the Nets

Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James, left, shoots as Los Angeles forward Kawhi Leonard defends during the first half of an NBA game Sunday, March 8, 2020, in Los Angeles.

to their second straight victory. The team said Saturday morning that the team and Atkinson "mutually agreed to part ways."

Otto Porter Jr. led the Bulls with 23 points.

Heat 100, Wizards 89

In Washington, Playing most of the second half without Jimmy Butler after he headed to the locker room, Miami beat the Wizards to snap a four-game road losing streak.

Bam Adebayo had 27 points and 14 rebounds for Miami. Butler left the game with 4-plus minutes remaining in the third quarter and did not return.

Bradley Beal scored 23 points for the Wizards, ending his streak of 21 games in a row with at least 25. He shot 0 or 9 in the fourth quarter. Shabazz Napier topped Washington with 27.

Cavaliers 132, Spurs 129, OT

In Cleveland, Andre Drummond returned from a leg injury to score 28 points and add 17 rebounds, and Kevin Love made a big 3-pointer in overtime to lift the Cavaliers past San Antonio.

Cleveland improved to 5-5 under coach J.B. Bickerstaff.

DeMar DeRozan scored 25 points for the Spurs.

Knicks 96, Pistons 84

In New York, Julius Randle had 22 points and 12 rebounds and the Knicks pulled away in the fourth quarter to beat Detroit.

Elfrid Payton added 16 points, six assists and five rebounds for the Knicks.

Christian Wood had 22 points and eight rebounds for the Pistons.

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Tyrrell Hatton felt the Arnold Palmer Invitational slipping away Sunday, perhaps unaware that everyone else trying to survive another brutal test at Bay Hill was feeling the same way.

He gave the wrong kind of salute to the 11th hole when he walked off the green after a double bogey cut his lead to one shot. It looked as though he was about to lose his mind.

Instead, he won the tournament with clutch play amid high stress, closing with seven straight pars for a 2-over 74 and a one-shot victory over Marc Leishman.

"The hardest thing for me today was trying to keep my-

Hatton wins Bay Hill; McIlroy falls short anew

self level-headed," Hatton said. "Obviously, there was a few times where I did boil over a little bit, but nothing compared to what I've been like in the past. I feel like with how tough it was — for me — I did a good job."

He was even better with the clubs in his hands.

The 8-iron out of ankle-deep rough over the water to a front pin on No. 13. Par saves from off the back of the green on the 14th and 15th holes because the greens were so brittle they wouldn't hold anything. The best of all was his

5-iron to 25 feet on the par-3 17th for another par, a satisfying score on this day.

Bay Hill served up the most demanding test this side of a major, and Hatton kept it together down the stretch Sunday for his first PGA Tour victory, and his fifth worldwide.

The only time he choked was when he took a gulp of Ketel One vodka—Palmer's favorite drink—during a toast to the King. Palmer would have loved to see this struggle, and Hatton's performance

over the final hour was regal.

Leishman (73) stayed on his heels and said to caddy Matt Kelly walking up the par-5 16th, "Of all the courses on the PGA Tour, this is the last one you'd pick if you had a two-shot

lead with three to go." He then birdied the 16th to get within one. He closed with two pars. It still wasn't enough.

"Tyrrell never gave up," Leishman said. "He did what he needed to on a really, really tough course."

It was Hatton's fifth victory

worldwide, and first on the PGA Tour, and it came in just his second start since returning from surgery on his right wrist during the offseason.

But the 28-year-old Englishman could only smile when he tapped in a 3-foot par putt on the 18th.

Hatton finished at 4-under 284, one of only four players who beat par for the week, the fewest at Bay Hill since 1980. So severe was the course that Matt Fitzpatrick closed with a 69 and was the only player to break 70 on the weekend.

Rory McIlroy, one shot be-

hind going into the final round, had a 76 for his highest closing round since a 76 in the 2013 U.S. Open at Merion. He was done in by a double bogey on the par-5 sixth when his 90-yard bunker shot went over the green and against the rocks framing the lake, and another double bogey on the ninth when his tee shot went out-of-bounds left onto the practice range.

"I stood up here yesterday saying that the key tomorrow was to keep the big numbers off your card, and I made two of those today," McIlroy said. "And that's what cost me."

He still tied for fifth, his eighth consecutive top 5 worldwide dating to late September.



Report: Cowboys offer \$105M guaranteed to Prescott



TEXAS—Dallas Cowboys representatives and the agent for quarterback

Dak Prescott have reportedly spoken twice since the end of the 2019 season, per the Dallas Morning News. It could be a promising sign for negotiations, as the two sides hadn't spoken since September.

The team offered Prescott, 26, a deal with \$105 million guaranteed and worth an average of \$33 million per season, according to the Dallas Morning News. The two sides were also close to a deal in September, according to reports, that would have paid Prescott approximately \$33 million per season.

But the two-time Pro Bowl selection reportedly upped his price, and played out the final year of his four-year rookie contract this past season. That deal paid him approximately \$2.7 million over the length of the contract.

Players are voting on the new collective bargaining agreement right now and have until March 12 to do so. The CBA could change the rules, and ESPN's Adam Schefter reported that it's also impacting the lag on Tom Brady's discussions with the New England Patriots.

It could also change the franchise tag rules immediately. The Cowboys have until Thursday to place a franchise tag on Prescott or Amari Cooper, the soon-to-be free agent receiver.

Pats' offer to Brady remains Belichick's call

As quarterback Tom Brady and the New England Patriots move closer toward the



In this Dec. 22, 2019 file photo, Dallas Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott (4) is pulled down by Philadelphia Eagles' Vinny Curry (75) during the second half of an NFL game in Philadelphia.

worked. Why would Kraft tell Belichick that he has to pay Brady or otherwise make a commitment that Belichick doesn't want to make? At a time when some see reasons to believe that Father Time is in the process of taking Tommy down, only one person is in prime position to make that assessment. And Belichick will decide, without regarding to sentiment or history or name on the jersey or potential local backlash, the terms that should be offered.

The broader question that rarely gets addressed in this context is whether Belichick, fully aware that Father Time is undefeated, would rather make the move now, given the various veteran options that are available at quarterback. But Belichick won't be sharing his plans with anyone until the time comes to implement them.

That time is coming. And the point for now is that, whatever Belichick plans to do, Kraft plans to let Belichick do it. Which is exactly the way Kraft should play it.

moment at which it will be time to poo or get off the loo, it's becoming more clear that the decisions to be made by Patriots coach Bill Belichick will be final.

Tom Curran of NBC Sports Boston reports that owner Robert Kraft will not intercede to ensure that Brady will remain a Patriot for a 21st season.

Per Curran, if the gap between Brady and Belichick is

small, Kraft will try to nudge them together. At a certain point, though, Kraft won't pull rank or otherwise force the man who runs the football operations in New England to do something he doesn't want to do.

Curran explains that the persistent belief that Kraft will trump Belichick comes from the lingering opinion that Kraft pulled strings to get Belichick to trade Brady's

backup, Jimmy Garoppolo, to the 49ers in 2017. Curran disputes this notion, something Kraft vehemently disputed at the time reports of his intervention emerged, bluntly calling it a "lie."

While plenty of owners meddle (it's one of the most often misused benefits of being an owner), Kraft has allowed Belichick to do his thing for 20 years—and it's

vest in youth national teams and other programs, such as player, coach and referee development.

"There is indeed a significant difference in World Cup prize money awarded by FIFA to the men's and women's championship teams," Cordeiro wrote. "However, it is not reasonable or fiscally sound for U.S. Soccer to make up the gap. It would seriously impair our ability to support our mission and invest in these other critical developmental areas."

The women have a labor contract covering 2017-21. The deal for the men expired at the end of 2018.

Levison criticized the USSF for asking that talks be confidential, then issuing a statement with its view of talks.

"There is no compromising on equal pay," she said. "Equal is equal."

US Soccer, women's players at odds over 'equal pay' offer

NEW YORK (AP)—The U.S. Soccer Federation says it has offered the women's national team equal pay to male counterparts for matches under USSF control but maintains the women want bonuses for tournaments such as the World Cup to match those of the men.

The women disputed the USSF account, saying the federation proposed to match rates the men had under their labor deal that expired in December 2018 and the USSF offer was for only for a portion of the women under contract.

"Since extending this offer, we have made multiple attempts to meet with the WNT to discuss these new options," USSF President Carlos Cordeiro wrote Saturday night in a letter to federation friends and supporters. "So far, they have repeatedly declined our invitation to meet on the premise

that our proposal does not include U.S. Soccer agreeing to make up the difference in future prize money awarded by FIFA for the Men's and Women's World Cups."

Players on the U.S. women's national team are seeking more than \$66 million in damages as part of their gender discrimination lawsuit against the USSF, which is scheduled for a trial starting May 5 at U.S. District Court in Los Angeles.

Cordeiro's letter was released a day before the American women play Spain in a pre-Olympic prep event called the SheBelieves Cup.

"The USSF letter is riddled with falsehoods and issued on the eve of the SheBelieves game, which demonstrates that it is more important to USSF to diminish the women's team than it is to support them on the

field," players spokeswoman Molly Levinson said in a statement. "USSF did not and has never offered equal pay to the women players."

FIFA awarded \$400 million in prize money for the 2018 men's World Cup, including \$38 million to champion France, and \$30 million for last year's Women's World Cup, including \$4 million to the U.S. after the Americans won their second straight title. FIFA has increased the total to \$440 million for the 2022 men's World Cup and FIFA President Gianni Infantino has proposed FIFA double the women's prize money to \$60 million for 2023.

FIFA pays bonuses to national federations, which each makes its own deal with its players.

Cordeiro said the USSF also had responsibility to in-



Indian Wells tennis postponed after coronavirus confirmed

CALIFORNIA (AP)—The BNP Paribas Open, the near-major tennis tournament set to begin this week in the California desert, won't be played as scheduled after a case of coronavirus was confirmed in the Coachella Valley.

It's the largest U.S. sporting event to be called off over concerns about the spread of the disease. The South by Southwest Festival in Austin, Texas, was canceled Friday.

The announcement came Sunday night after many players were already in the desert practicing. Qualifying matches were to begin Monday with women's main draw matches starting Wednesday and the men's draw beginning Thursday.

"We're here and still deciding what's next," tweeted Rafael Nadal, the world's second-ranked player. "So sad for all that is happening around the world with this situation. Hopefully soon solutions from the authorities. Stay all well and safe."

The Riverside County Public Health Department

declared a public health emergency for the desert cities 110 miles east of Los Angeles, including Indian Wells where the ATP and WTA tours were to play the two-week tournament.

Gov. Gavin Newsom has declared a state of emergency. California has reported 114 cases of the virus.

"There is too great a risk, at this time, to the public health of the Riverside County area in holding a large gathering of this size," Dr. David Agus, professor of medicine and biomedical engineering at the University of Southern California, said Sunday. The event typically draws upwards of 450,000 fans. It is commonly referred to as the "fifth slam" because of its popularity among the players and its stature, ranking points and over \$17 million in prize money that place it one rung below tennis' four Grand Slam tournaments. This year's field included Nadal, Novak Djokovic, Serena Williams, Naomi Osaka and Coco Gauff. Kim Clijsters was set to continue her comeback at the event.

MCS Varsity sweeps regular season

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Mt. Carmel School Varsity finished the elimination round

of the 2019-2020 Public School System Interscholastic Boys High School Basketball League with a perfect record after winning a pair of match-

es last Thursday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium. MCS Varsity first routed Saipan International School, 35-19, before posting another

easy victory over MCS 2, 41-11, to wrap up the round-robin preliminaries with an 11-0 record.



With their undefeated mark, the Knights will be seeded first in the double-elimination playoff round that will take place this Friday and Saturday, also at the MHS Gymnasium.

The first round pairings have yet to be released, but

MCS Varsity will be joined in this weekend's competition by the eight other teams that made the grade in the elimination and Tinian. Qualifying along with the Knights and the No. 5 seed Tinian Stallions are No. 2 seed Kagman High School Junior Varsity (9-2), No. 3 Saipan Southern High School (9-2), No. 4 SIS (7-4), No. 6 Agape Christian School (7-3), No. 7 MHS Varsity (7-4), No. 8 MHS 3 (4-7), No. 9 KHS Varsity (3-7), and No.

10 KHS 3 (3-8). MHS JV (2-7), MCS 2 (0-9), and Da'Ok Academy (0-8) missed the cut.

KHS 3 took the final playoff seat following its 43-36 win over KHS Varsity last Thursday.

In other results in the final set of regular season games, MHS 3 dominated MCS 2 on the north court, 37-15, while MHS Varsity crushed KHS Varsity, 45-21. On the south end, Saipan Southern edged Agape, 32-29.

No fans, no fun: Athletes uneasy over empty-arena solutions

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP)—As U.S. sports leagues weigh whether to bar fans from ballparks and stadiums to help stall the coronavirus outbreak, San Francisco Giants pitcher Jeff Samardzija is one of the few players who can tell them exactly what that feels like.

"It's not very fun," he said.

Samardzija pitched for the Chicago White Sox in a 2015 game played without fans in Baltimore due to civil unrest in the city. It was a bizarre scene at Camden Yards—a sun-drenched stadium, empty except for the teams—but something that has already become common internationally and could happen in the U.S. if there's no slowdown to the spread of the COVID-19 strain that has infected more than 100,000 people worldwide.

The global virus outbreak has caused concern about cramming tens of thousands of

fans in for games that technically can go on without them.

Sports leagues in Europe, Asia and the Middle East have already locked supporters out of venues, and the NBA sent a memo to its franchises Friday warning them to prepare for the possibility that it may have to host games without fans.

While U.S. sports leagues have been in regular contact with each other regarding the outbreak, MLB and the NHL have not yet issued similar notices.

Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred plans to discuss the coronavirus with team owners in a conference call Monday—the first league-wide call between clubs and the commissioner about the outbreak. But at this stage, the league plans to open the season in 2 1/2 weeks as planned.

With the situation evolving quickly, athletes in the U.S. are

becoming aware — and concerned—about the possibility of playing behind closed doors.

Los Angeles Lakers star LeBron James said Friday he "ain't playing if I ain't got the fans in the crowd," and other players also said they'd be disappointed to suit up for empty seats.

"Boring. Boring," Chicago White Sox shortstop Tim Anderson said. "We get the energy from our fans. It would suck, man."

Virus concerns are greater in some pockets of the country—like in Washington state, which has reported 16 deaths and more than 100 people diagnosed.

Fears around the outbreak have already affected sports attendance there. The Seattle Sounders drew 33,080 fans Saturday night, the smallest crowd for an MLS regular season match in the soccer-crazed city since the club's inaugural season in 2009.

BLUE

From Page 24

Buenabajo 4.

JSN 69—Mungcal 16, Wesley 14, Alegre 13, Tabora 12, Ocampo 4, Garcia 2.

Scoring by quarters: 25-12, 41-26, 67-47, 89-69.

Third Place

IT&E 78—Lerio 25, G. Masga 13, Joyner 13, Poquiz 8, Zapata 5, D. Masga 4, Viola

4, Dequito 2.

Old Iskool 74—Pangelinan 21, Estolas 12, Abuy 9, Grimpula 9, Tolentino 5, Pablo 5, Sublemente 4, Bartolo 3, Montano 2.

Scoring by quarters: 21-22, 39-31, 58-52, 78-74.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Mt. Carmel School Varsity's Chioni Dela Cruz, second left, attempts to pick up a loose ball, while three Kagman High School Junior Varsity defenders stay close to him during their regular season game in the 2019-2020 Public School System Interscholastic Boys High School Basketball League at the Marianas High School Gymnasium. MCS Varsity swept the regular season, earning an 11-0 record.

WOMEN'S

From Page 24

(Oleai Sports Complex) was the luxury field. I am so grateful that the federation (Northern Mariana Islands Football Association) continues to support the game and that so many women, like Catherine Toves, Patty Coleman, and Mae Ito, are the force behind the organization," said Kathy Ruszala, who was among the nearly 200 female players that participated in last Sunday's activities, including the 3 v 3 Jamboree.

"It was fun playing with friends, but more so watching Leilani (her daughter) enjoy the sport as much as I do. I also loved seeing all those girls and women come out for the event," she added.

Ruszala played for Mama's Still Kickin' and teamed up with Ronda Gross, Shawna Brennfleck, and Robyn Spaeth in ruling the Masters Division of the 3 v 3 Jamboree, as they bested more than 10 teams.

Other division champions were Matansa (U9), TanHoldings Football Club Betde (U12), Soccer With Attitude

(U15), and Power Puff Girls (Women's Division). The division winners were recognized during a brief awards ceremony attended by NMIFA president Jerry Tan, general secretary Ross Zapanta, and NMIFA Women's Committee chair Catherine Attao.

"It was a beautiful day to

celebrate the success that NMIFA has had with the girls and women's program," Attao said.

"Everywhere you look, there were many smiles, laughter, encouragement, and great camaraderie. We hope that next year, we will see many new faces and more players joining the different

leagues throughout the year," added Attao, who also played in the Masters Division.

NMIFA and the members and officials of the women's committee would like to thank the referees, scorekeepers, and volunteers who made the success of the 2020 AFC Women's Football Day possible.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Mothers enjoy a light moment together before playing in their respective games in the Masters Division of the 3 v 3 Jamboree held during the Asian Football Confederation Women's Football Day last Sunday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Two Matansa players are against Kanoa's Loyda Ito, right, during their game in the Masters Division of the 3 v 3 Jamboree.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Children gather for a photo during a break in their games.



Lakers end
Clippers' 6-game
winning
streak
PAGE 21

Saipan Tribune Sports

Report:
Cowboys
offer \$105M
guaranteed to
Prescott
PAGE 22



24 TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2020

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Women's soccer has come a long way



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Participants and organizers of the Asian Football Confederation Women's Football Day pose for a photo before starting the activities last Sunday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

More than a decade ago, CNMI female players' ex-

perience in soccer was limited to suiting up in a co-ed league and running around makeshift pitches.

Today, the Common-

wealth's female players have a league of their own and even had an event solely dedicated to them—the Asian



Football Confederation-led 2020 Women's Football Day held last Sunday at the NMI Soccer Training Center

in Koblerville.

"Women's soccer has come a long way in the CNMI. I still remember playing in fields (Commonwealth Ports

Authority and American Memorial Park) covered in pot-holes and how the Oleai pitch

See **WOMEN'S** on Page 23

Blue Haus takes Masters title



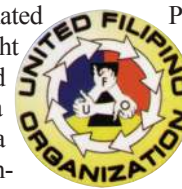
By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Blue Haus pushed all the right buttons in its Masters Division finals game against JSN in the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League to cruise to an 89-69 victory last Sunday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Blue Haus dominated the title match right from the get-go and never gave JSN a chance to mount a comeback, as the eventual champion did a good job on both ends of the court to clinch the division crown and finish the season undefeated.

On offense, Blue Haus had a 10-2 scoring run in the first four minutes of the finale to set the tone in the game. Ed Diaz and Errol Peredo hit two shots each and Elmer Esdrelon added a basket in the surge, while JSN drew its lone field goal from Ferdie Tobias.

JSN was held to 2 points for a while, as Blue Haus' interior defense made it hard for the former to produce baskets. JSN finally got its second field goal at the seventh minute and change of the first period or just when Blue Haus was starting to pull away. Junar Guiab finished what Esdrelon,



Peredo, and Diaz started, as he scored at will, tallying 8 points in the first quarter that ended with Blue Haus ahead by twin digits, 25-13.

Blue Haus padded its lead as the game progressed, as the team continued to knock in multiple baskets inside and out and neutralized JSN's key players. Tony Diaz, who did not see action the first quarter, made his presence felt in the finals when he logged 11 points in the second canto to lift Blue Haus to a 41-26 advantage.

The lead ballooned to as much as 22 in the third period, 65-43, as Tony Diaz, Peredo, and Guiab teamed up in delivering the killer blows for Blue Haus.

Tony Diaz paced Blue Haus with his 21 points, while six of his teammates also finished in double figures. Guiab registered 18, Peredo recorded 14, Ed Diaz and Esdrelon had 11,

and Edwin Santos added 10 for Blue Haus, which wrapped up the season with an 11-0 record.

Randy Mungcal led JSN with his 16 points, but majority of them were posted in the fourth quarter when the game was already decided. Tim Wesley and Teng Alegre contributed 14 and 13 points, respectively, while Jun Tabora had a quiet 12 points, as he was limited to one field goal apiece in the first three quarters.

Meanwhile, IT&E took the third place honors in the Masters Division after downing Old Iskool in the consolation match last Saturday, 78-74.

Sonny Lerio top-scored for IT&E with his 25 points, while George Masga and Jawn Joyner chipped in 13 each.

Finals

Blue Haus 89—T. Diaz 21, Guiab 18, Peredo 14, E. Diaz 11, Esdrelon 11, Santos 10,

See **BLUE** on Page 23

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Blue Haus' Errol Peredo takes off for a jumper in front of JSN's Ferdie Tobias, right, and Jeff Jarap during the first quarter of their title game in the Masters Division of the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League last Sunday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.